MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
50¢ CC
23
02570
52 FULL PGS. NO ADS
moon-stone
ALL NEW MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS
MOONSTONE
ADAPTED FROM THE CLASSIC NOVEL BY WILKIE COLLINS

STAN LEE presents

MOONSTONE

by Wilkie Collins

ARCHIE GOODWIN
Editor in Chief
JOHN WARNER
Editor
DON McGREGOR
Script & Design
DINO CASTRILLO
Artist
CONDOY
Lettering
PETRA GOLDBERG
Coloring
RALPH MACCHIO
LEN GROW
NORA MACLIN
JOHN ROMITA JR.
HOWARD BENDER
Staff & Such

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Wilkie Collins was born in London on January 8, 1824. He was the son of landscape painter William Collins. Collins received his education at a private school in Highbury, until he was twelve, at which time he was taken to Italy for three years by his parents. Upon his return to England, he entered the tea business as a trader, only to later give it up for the practice of law, which he entered after three years of study at Lincoln's Inn in 1846. It was after his father's death in 1847, that his great interest in writing manifested itself. He made his literary debut with an essay in literature entitled *The Life of William Collins* in 1848. His first novel was published in 1850 *Antonia, Or The Fall of Rome*, which critics contend was a clear outgrowth of his years in Italy. Other novels soon followed and in 1854, Collins was introduced to Charles Dickens which led to Collins' contribution to *Household Words*. Among the highly successful novels which followed are *The Woman in White* (1860), *No Name* (1862), *Armadale* (1866), and *The Moonstone* (1886).

All of the above novels were considered near bestsellers in their day which made Collins one of those seldom seen literary creatures who enjoyed immense popularity during his lifetime. *The Moonstone* truly solidified Collins reputation as a first-class weaver of tales, combining great versatility with an uncanny knack for characterization. Although the narrative technique he employed of having the characters actually tell the story was much criticized in later years, it was imitated by other writers of note such as Bram Stoker (*Dracula*) with considerable effect. Although *The Moonstone* did not create the mystery/adventure genre; its veracity as a legitimate form of literary expression was surely enhanced by its existence.

Collins died in September of 1889 in London, after a long and successful career.

MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS® SERIES FEATURING MOONSTONE is published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Vol. 1. No. 23, 1977. Price 50¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the United States of America. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition.

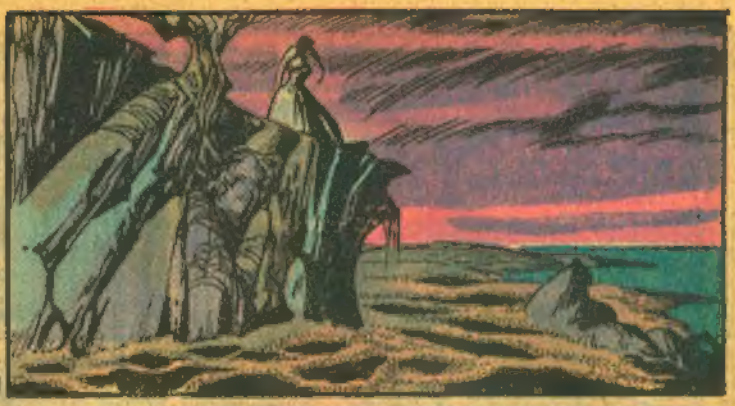
PROLOGUE:
THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM (1799)
EXTRACTED FROM A FAMILY PAPER.
I ADDRESS THESE LINES... WRITTEN IN INDIA... TO MY RELATIVES IN ENGLAND. MY OBJECT IS TO EXPLAIN THE MOTIVE WHICH HAS INDUCED ME TO REFUSE THE RIGHT HAND OF FRIENDSHIP TO MY COUSIN, JOHN HERNCASTLE.
THE PRIVATE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MY COUSIN AND ME TOOK RISE DURING THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM, ON THE 4th OF MAY, 1799.
I MUST REVERT FOR A MOMENT TO THE PERIOD BEFORE THE ASSAULT, AND TO THE STORIES CURRENT IN OUR CAMP OF THE TREASURE IN JEWELS AND GOLD STORED UP IN THE PALACE OF SERINGAPATAM.
The Moonstone
by WILKIE COLLINS

ONE OF THE WILDEST OF THESE STORIES RELATED TO A YELLOW DIAMOND.. A FAMOUS GEM IN THE NATIVE ANNALS OF INDIA.
THE EARLIEST KNOWN TRADITIONS DESCRIBE THE STONE AS HAVING BEEN SET IN THE FOREHEAD OF THE FOUR-HANDED INDIAN GOD WHO TYPIFIES THE MOON.
PARTLY FROM ITS PECULIAR COLOR, PARTLY FROM A SUPERSTITION THAT CLAIMED THE DIAMOND GREW AND LESSENED IN LUSTRE WITH THE WAXING AND WANING OF THE MOON--
--IT GAINED THE NAME OF... THE MOONSTONE!
OF ALL THE DEITIES WORSHIPPED IN THE TEMPLE, THE MOON-GOD ALONE ESCAPED THE RAPACITY OF THE CONQUERING MOHAMMEDANS.
PRESERVED BY THREE BRAHMANS, THE YELLOW DIAMOND WAS REMOVED BY NIGHT--
-- AND WAS TRANSPORTED TO THE SECOND OF THE SACRED CITIES IN INDIA... THE CITY OF BENARES.
HERE, IN A NEW SHRINE... THE MOON-GOD WAS SET UP AND WORSHIPPED. HERE, ON THE NIGHT WHEN THE SHRINE WAS COMPLETED, VISHNU THE PRESERVER APPEARED TO THE THREE BRAHMANS IN A DREAM.
THE DEITY COMMANDED THAT THE MOONSTONE BE WATCHED BY THE THREE PRIESTS, DAY AND NIGHT--
-- TO THE END OF THE GENERATIONS OF MEN!
THE DEITY PREDICTED CERTAIN DISASTER TO THE PRESUMPTUOUS MORTAL WHO LAID HANDS ON THE SACRED GEM--
AND TO ALL OF HIS HOUSE AND NAME WHO RECEIVED IT AFTER HIM...

THE MOONSTONE WAS SEIZED BY AN OFFICER IN THE ARMY OF AURUNGZEBE.
POWERLESS TO RECOVER THEIR LOST TREASURE BY OPEN FORCE, THE THREE GUARDIAN PRIESTS FOLLOWED AND WATCHED IT IN DISGUISE, AS IT PASSED FROM HAND TO HAND... THE CURSE ALWAYS FOLLOWING!
LET ME NOW TAKE YOU ON THE DAY OF THE ASSAULT.
AAAHHHHHHH
I FOLLOWED MY COUSIN'S ACT OF CARNAGE INTO THE ARMORY, REPULSED BY WHAT HE HAD DONE.
HE HELD ONTO A DAGGER, INTO WHICH WAS SET A FABULOUS STONE.
THE MOONSTONE WILL HAVE ITS VENGEANCE YET— —ON YOU AND YOURS!
THROUGH THE REMAINDER OF THE NIGHT I SAW NO MORE OF MY COUSIN, COLONEL JOHN HERNCASTLE.
ALTHOUGH I ATTACH NO SORT OF CREDIT TO THE FANTASTIC INDIAN LEGEND OF THE GEM, IT IS MY CONVICTION THAT CRIME BRINGS ITS OWN FATALITY WITH IT. I BELIEVE IF HERNCASTLE KEEPS THE DIAMOND THAT HE WILL LIVE TO...
REGRET IT!

THE STORY... FIRST PERIOD-LOSS OF THE DIAMOND (1849) THE EVENTS RELATED BY GABRIEL BETTEREDGE, HOUSE-STEWARD IN THE SERVICE OF JULIA, LADY VERINDER.
IN THE FIRST PART OF ROBINSON CRUSOE, AT PG. 128, YOU WILL FIND IT THUS WRITTEN: "NOW I SAW, THOUGH TOO LATE, THE FOLLY OF BEGINNING A WORK BEFORE WE COUNT THE COST, AND BEFORE WE JUDGE RIGHTLY OF OUR OWN STRENGTH TO GO THROUGH WITH IT."
ONLY YESTERDAY I OPENED MY ROBINSON CRUSOE AT THAT PLACE. ONLY THIS MORNING CAME MY LADY'S NEPHEW, MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE, WITH A TASK TO PONDER.
STARTING FROM THESE PLAIN FACTS, THE LAWYER'S IDEA IS THAT WE SHOULD ALL WRITE THE STORY OF THE MOONSTONE IN TURN... AS FAR AS OUR OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE EXTENDS, AND NO FURTHER.
MY LADY WAS ONE OF THE NERNCASTLE FAMILY. LADY JULIA MARRIED THE LATE SIR JOHN VERINDER, WHO ONLY WANTED SOMEBODY TO MANAGE HIM; AND, BETWEEN OURSELVES, HE FOUND SOMEBODY TO DO IT.
BETTEREDGE, I HAVE BEEN TO A LAWYER'S ABOUT THE LOSS OF THE INDIAN DIAMOND.
THE LAWYER THINKS, AS I THINK, THAT THE WHOLE STORY OUGHT... IN THE INTERESTS OF TRUTH... TO BE PLACED ON RECORD IN WRITING --
-- AND THE SOONER THE BETTER.
MY DAUGHTER, PENELOPE, WHO WORKS AS A MAID FOR MY LADY JULIA, SUGGESTS I BEGIN THIS PIECE WITH THE DAY WE RECEIVED THE NEWS THAT MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE WAS EXPECTED TO VISIT THE HOUSE.
I HAD NOT SEEN MR. FRANKLIN SINCE HE WAS A BOY, LIVING ALONG WITH US IN THIS HOUSE. HIS FATHER HAD LOST A RIGHTFUL POSITION AS A DUKE, AND GOT EVEN WITH ENGLAND BY NOT LETTING HIS COUNTRY HAVE THE HONOR OF EDUCATING HIS SON.
BEFORE PROCEEDING, I MUST INTRODUCE MISS JULIA'S DAUGHTER, RACHEL. SHE IS ONE OF THE PRETTIEST GIRLS YOUR EYES EVER LOOKED ON.
TO SEE HER SIT DOWN, TO SEE HER GET UP AND ESPECIALLY TO SEE HER WALK, WAS ENOUGH TO SATISFY ANY MAN THAT THE GRACES OF HER FIGURE (IF YOU WILL PARDON THE EXPRESSION) WERE IN HER FLESH, AND NOT IN HER CLOTHES.

BEFORE I TELL YOU OF THE DAY FRANKLIN BLAKE ARRIVED, I MUST MAKE MENTION OF ROSANNA SPEARMAN, THE ONLY NEW SERVANT IN OUR HOUSE. SHE WAS A PLAIN WOMAN WITH THE ADDITIONAL MISFORTUNE OF HAVING ONE SHOULDER BIGGER THAN THE OTHER.



ROSANNA SPEARMAN HAD BEEN A THIEF. LADY JULIA HAD MET HER AT THE REFORMATORY, AND GAVE HER EMPLOYMENT.

BUT ENOUGH! ON THE DAY MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE WAS TO ARRIVE, MY DAUGHTER PENELOPE CAME TO ME AS IF THE HOUSE WAS ON FIRE.

FATHER! THERE ARE THREE INDIAN JUGGLERS ON LADY JULIA'S ESTATE—

-- AND I FEAR THEY MEAN MR. BLAKE GREAT MISCHIEF!

I SAW THEM EARLIER AND SENT THEM ON THEIR WAY. THEY HAD A SMALL LAD WITH THEM.

IT APPEARED THAT PENELOPE HAD JUST COME FROM OUR HOUSE, AND SPOTTED THE TRIO ACTING IN A MANNER THAT SEEMED THREATENING TO THEIR YOUNG COMPANION.

HOLD OUT YOUR HAND!

NO!

DO YOU WANT TO BE SENT BACK TO LONDON... LEFT WHERE WE FOUND YOU? SLEEPING IN AN ALLEYWAY.

WE WANT YOU TO LOOK INTO YOUR HAND... AND SEE THE VISIONS.

ALRIGHT... I... I'LL LOOK.

DO YOU SEE THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN FROM FOREIGN PARTS?

I SEE HIM.

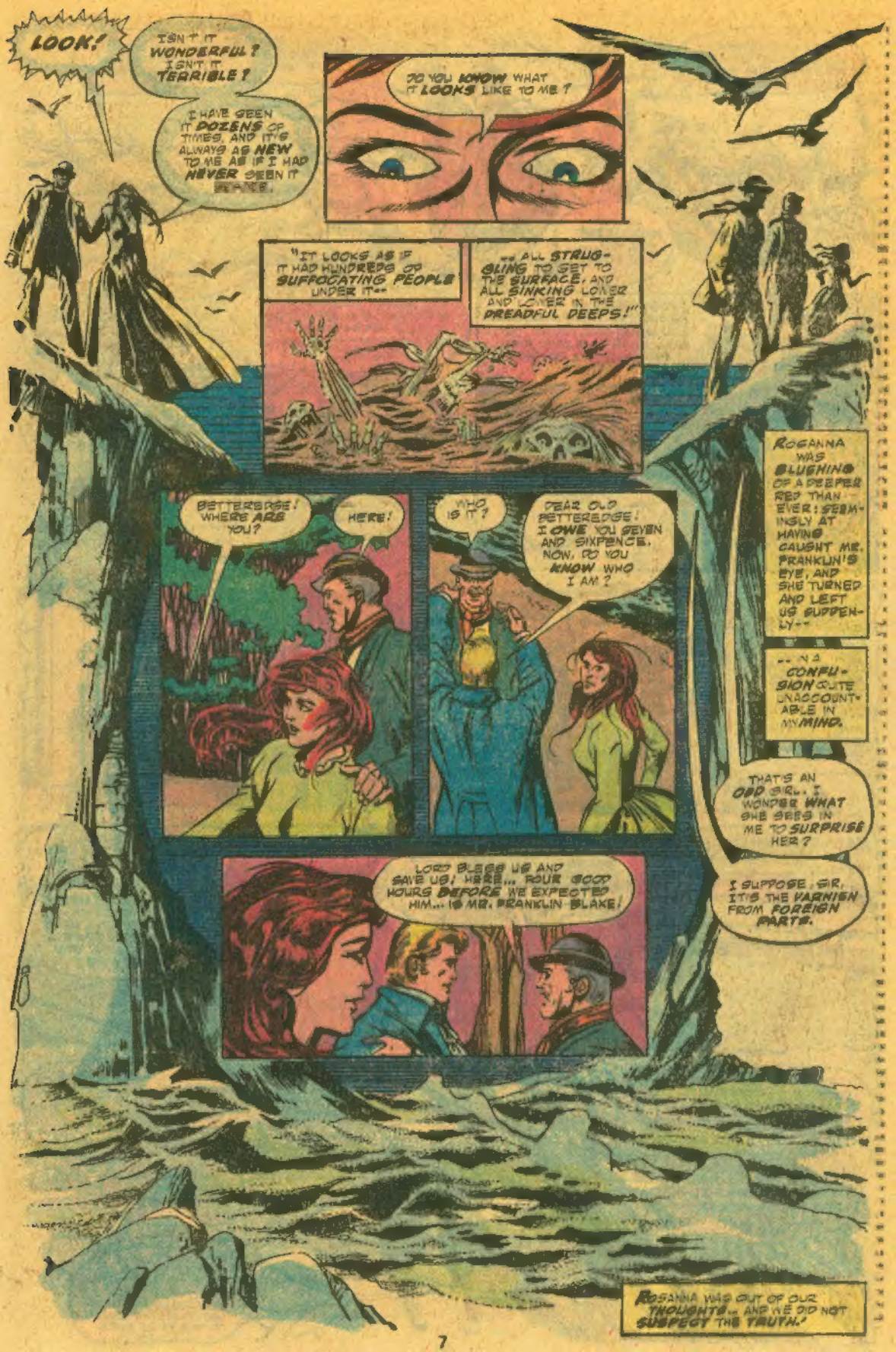
IS IT THE ROAD TO THIS HOUSE, AND ON NO OTHER THAT THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN WILL PASS BY US TODAY?

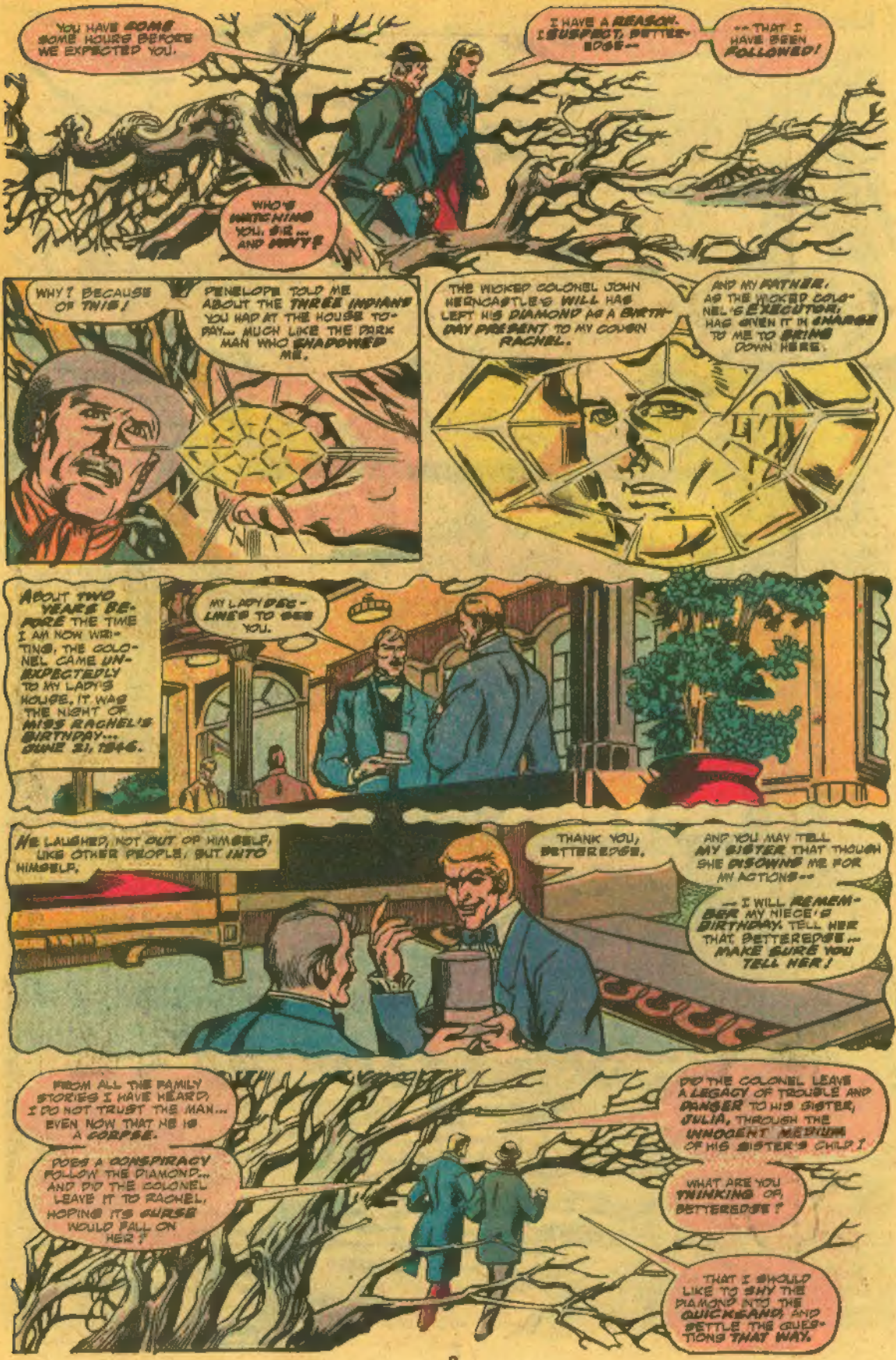
YES.

WILL HE COME AT THE CLOSE OF DAY?

I... CAN'T -- TELL.

AFTER THAT THEY ALL WENT ON THEIR WAY TOWARD THE TOWN.
MOST THINGS, THEY SAY, HAVE A MORAL, IF YOU ONLY LOOK FOR IT. WHAT WAS THE MORAL OF THIS?
I'LL KEEP MY EYE OUT FOR THOSE RAPSCALLIONS, PENELOPE.
AT THE SAME TIME, YOU'D BEST LOOK FOR ROSANNA. SHE'S LATE FOR DINNER.
OUR HOUSE IS HIGH UP ON THE YORKSHIRE COAST, AND CLOSE BY THE SEA. THE SAND-HILLS HERE RUN DOWN TO THE SEA, AND END IN TWO SPLITS OF ROCK JUTTING OUT OPPOSITE EACH OTHER.
BETWEEN THE TWO LIES THE MOST HORRIBLE QUICK-SAND ON THE SHORES OF YORKSHIRE. AT THE TURN OF THE TIDE SOMETHING GOES ON IN THE UNKNOWN DEPTHS..
-- WHICH SETS THE WHOLE FACE OF THE QUICKSAND QUIVERING IN A MANNER MOST REMARKABLE, FEARFULLY. PEOPLE CALL IT --
--THE SHIVERING SAND!
THIS WAS ROSANNA SPEARMAN'S FAVORITE WALK.
ROSANNA! WHAT ARE YOU CRYING ABOUT?
THE VERY BIRDS OF THE AIR, AS IT SEEMS TO ME, GIVE THE SHIVERING SAND A WIDE BERTH. THE SANDS HEAVED AS ROSANNA ANSWERED.
ABOUT THE YEARS THAT ARE GONE, MR. BETTERedge... MY PAST LIFE STILL COMES BACK TO ME SOMETIMES.
WHAT IS IT THAT BRINGS YOU EVERLASTINGLY TO THIS MISERABLE PLACE?
SOMETHING DRAWS ME TO IT.
I TRY TO KEEP AWAY FROM IT... AND I CAN'T! SOMETIMES--
-- SOMETIMES, MR. BETTEREDGE, I THINK THAT--
-- MY GRAVE IS WAITING FOR ME HERE!


LOOK!
ISN'T IT WONDERFUL? ISN'T IT TERRIBLE?
I HAVE SEEN IT DOZENS OF TIMES, AND IT'S ALWAYS AS NEW TO ME AS IF I HAD NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO ME?
"IT LOOKS AS IF IT HAD HUNDREDS OF SUFFOCATING PEOPLE UNDER IT--
-- ALL STRUGGLING TO GET TO THE SURFACE, AND ALL SINKING LOWER AND LOWER IN THE DREADFUL DEEPS!"
BETTERIDGE! WHERE ARE YOU?
HERE!
WHO IS IT?
DEAR OLD BETTERIDGE! I OWE YOU SEVEN AND SIXPENCE. NOW, DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
ROSANNA WAS BLUSHING OF A DEEPER RED THAN EVER; SEEMINGLY AT HAVING CAUGHT MR. FRANKLIN'S EYE, AND SHE TURNED AND LEFT US SUDDENLY--
-- IN A CONFUSION QUITE UNACCOUNTABLE IN MY MIND.
THAT'S AN ODD GIRL. I WONDER WHAT SHE SEES IN ME TO SURPRISE HER?
I SUPPOSE, SIR, IT'S THE VARNISH FROM FOREIGN PARTS.
LORD BLESS US AND SAVE US! HERE... FOUR GOOD HOURS BEFORE WE EXPECTED HIM... IS MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE!
ROSANNA WAS OUT OF OUR THOUGHTS... AND WE DID NOT SUSPECT THE TRUTH!


YOU HAVE COME SOME HOURS BEFORE WE EXPECTED YOU.
I HAVE A REASON, I SUSPECT, BETTERIDGE--
-- THAT I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED!
WHO'S WATCHING YOU, SIR... AND WHY?
WHY? BECAUSE OF THIS!
PENELOPE TOLD ME ABOUT THE THREE INDIANS YOU HAD AT THE HOUSE TODAY... MUCH LIKE THE DARK MAN WHO SHADOWED ME.
THE WICKED COLONEL JOHN HERNCASTLE'S WILL HAS LEFT HIS DIAMOND AS A BIRTHDAY PRESENT TO MY COUSIN RACHEL.
AND MY FATHER, AS THE WICKED COLONEL'S EXECUTOR, HAS GIVEN IT IN CHARGE TO ME TO BRING DOWN HERE.
ABOUT TWO YEARS BEFORE THE TIME I AM NOW WRITING, THE COLONEL CAME UNEXPECTEDLY TO MY LADY'S HOUSE, IT WAS THE NIGHT OF MISS RACHEL'S BIRTHDAY... JUNE 21, 1846.
MY LADY DECLINES TO SEE YOU.
HE LAUGHED, NOT OUT OF HIMSELF, LIKE OTHER PEOPLE, BUT INTO HIMSELF.
THANK YOU, BETTERIDGE.
AND YOU MAY TELL MY SISTER THAT THOUGH SHE DISOWNS ME FOR MY ACTIONS--
-- I WILL REMEMBER MY NIECE'S BIRTHDAY. TELL HER THAT BETTERIDGE... MAKE SURE YOU TELL HER!
FROM ALL THE FAMILY STORIES I HAVE HEARD, I DO NOT TRUST THE MAN... EVEN NOW THAT HE IS A CORPSE.
DOES A CONSPIRACY FOLLOW THE DIAMOND... AND DID THE COLONEL LEAVE IT TO RACHEL, HOPING ITS CURSE WOULD FALL ON HER?
DID THE COLONEL LEAVE A LEGACY OF TROUBLE AND DANGER TO HIS SISTER, JULIA, THROUGH THE UNWITTING MEDIUM OF HIS SISTER'S CHILD?
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF, BETTERIDGE?
THAT I SHOULD LIKE TO SHY THE DIAMOND INTO THE QUICKSAND, AND SETTLE THE QUESTIONS THAT WAY.

THE DAY MR BLAKE ARRIVED WAS THE 25th OF MAY 1848. WE HAD NEAR A YONTH TILL RACHEL'S BIRTHDAY AND MR BLAKE KEPT THE DIAMOND LOCKED IN A BANK VAULT. THE INDIANS WHO HAD HOPED TO WAYLAY HIM VANISHED.

THE MONTH PASSED SLOWLY. AND MR BLAKE AND RACHEL ATTENDED QUITE A BIT OF TIME TOGETHER.

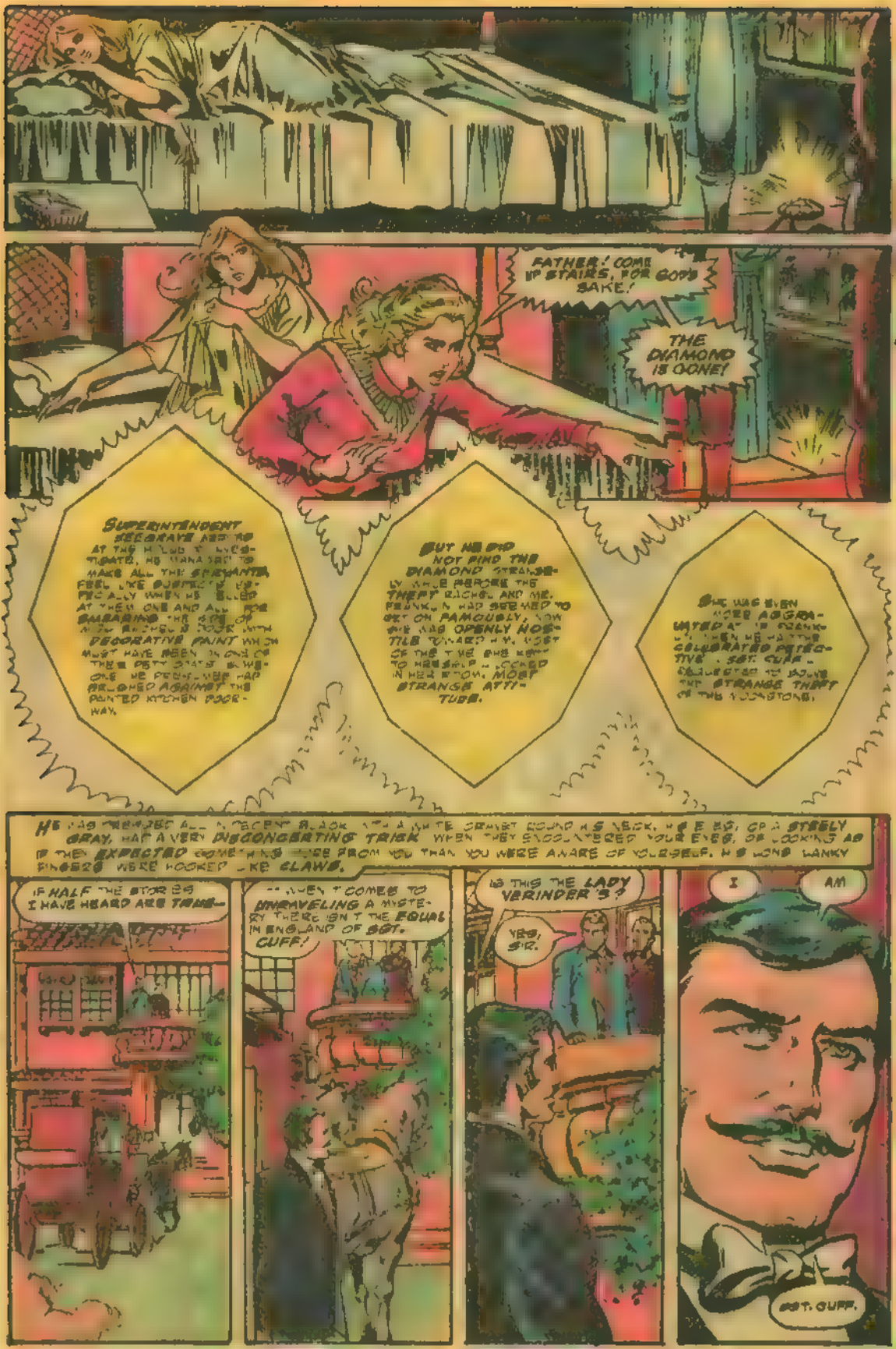
Gentlefolks in general have a very awkward rock ahead in life. the rock ahead of their own idleness. Often they drift into some nasty pursuit. Nine times out of ten they take to torturing something, or to spoiling something, and they firmly believe they are improving their minds, when the plain truth is, they are only making a mess in the house. I have seen them (Ladies I am sorry to say, as well as men) go out, day after day, and catch newts, and spiders, and frogs, and come home and stick pins through the miserable wretches, or cut them up, without a pang of remorse, into little pieces. They pore over the spider's insides with a magnifying glass, or you meet one of their frogs walking down stairs without his head: and when you wonder what this cruel nastiness means, you are told that it means a taste for natural history. Sometimes, again, you see them spoiling a pretty flower, out of a stupid curiosity to know what the flower is made of. Is its color any prettier, or its scent any sweeter, when you do know. But there! the poor souls must get through the time, you see. You dabble in nasty mud when you were a child, and you dissect spiders, and spoil flowers, when you grow up.

AS FOR MR. FRANKLIN AND MISS RACHEL, THEY TORTURED NOTHING, AND ALL THEY SPOILT WAS THE DOOR THAT THEY "DECORATIVELY PAINTED."

THEY FINISHED BY JUNE 23... THE NIGHT OF MISS RACHEL'S BIRTHDAY.

JUNE 21 WAS CLOUDY AND UNSETTLED AT SUNRISE, BY EVENING THE GUESTS HAD ARRIVED AND FROM THE BEGINNING IT SEEMED A FATEFUL NIGHT.
MR. GODFREY ABLEWHITE ARRIVED WITH THE MORNING. HE WAS A BARRISTER BY PROFESSION... A LADIES' MAN BY TEMPERAMENT... AND LIKE MR. FRANK... HE WAS RACHEL'S COUSIN.
MR CANDY WAS A DOCTOR AT PRIZING-HALL. IN SOCIETY HE WAS CONSTANTLY TAKING HIS TAKES... IN HIS MEDICAL PRACTICE HE WAS A MORE PRUDENT MAN.
OF THE GUESTS WAS THE EMINENT PUBLIC CHARACTER... HE WAS NO OTHER THAN THE CELEBRATED INDIAN TRAVELER... MR. MURTHWAITE, WHO AT THE RISK OF HIS LIFE HAD PENETRATED INTO SOUTH WHERE NO EUROPEAN HAD EVER SET FOOT BEFORE.
RACHEL... IT IS TIME TO GIVE YOU A SPECIAL... AND MYSTERIOUS GIFT... A GIFT WHICH WILL STEAL YOUR BREATH!
FRANK... YOU SEND DRAMA TO MY BIRTHDAY.
THE MOONSTONE SEEMED UNFATHOMABLE AS THE HEAVENS THEMSELVES... IT SHONE AWFULLY OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF ITS OWN DARKNESS... WITH A MOONY GLEAM.
WHO IS THIS FROM, FRANK-UN?
YOUR BROTHER... ON HIS DEATH-BED, HE WILLED THE MOONSTONE TO RACHEL... I HOPE IT BRINGS MY LOVELY COUSIN GOOD FORTUNE.
IT IS INDEED AN IMPRESSIVE GEM... RACHEL... MIGHT I SEE YOU FOR A MOMENT IN THE LIBRARY
AH, ANOTHER MYSTERY! THIS IS A NIGHT, OF COURSE GODFREY, EXCUSE US PLEASE.
LOOKING BACK AT THE BIRTHDAY NOW BY THE LIGHT OF WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARD...
-- I AM HALF INCLINED TO THINK THAT THE CURSED DIAMOND MUST HAVE CAST A BLIGHT ON THE WHOLE COMPANY.
I HAVE SLEPT BADLY THESE NIGHTS, DR. CANDY.
YOU NEED A GOOD COURSE OF MEDICINE IMMEDIATELY.
MEDICINE? HOW WILL THAT HELP? I'VE HEARD OF THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND, AND NOW I KNOW WHAT THE TERM MEANS.
YOU OFFEND MY PROFESSION, SIR. I SHALL PROVE MY STATEMENT... YOU WILL SEE! I WILL PROVE YOU WRONG!
RACHEL... I KNOW THIS IS OF A SUDDEN BUT WILL YOU TAKE MY HAND IN MARRIAGE.
I'M SORRY, GODFREY... I AM HONORED... BUT I CAN'T.
COME, LET US RETURN TO THE OTHERS... LET US FORGET WHAT WAS PASSED... AND LET US REMAIN COUSINS STILL.
THE DEVIL... (OR THE DIAMOND) POSSESSED THAT DINNER PARTY!

MR. MURTHWAITE SPOKE TO THE INDIANS IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE... AND, SURPRIZINGLY THEY REPLIED.
UNLESS I AM MISTAKEN, THOSE MEN ARE HIGH-CASTE BRAHMANS. I CHARGED THEM WITH BEING DISGUISED.
MR. FRANKLIN YOU HAVE BEEN CARRYING THE DIAMOND BACKWARD AND FORWARD HERE AND IN LONDON... AND YET YOU ARE STILL... A LIVING MAN!
LET US TRY AND ACCOUNT FOR THAT FACT.
THOSE MEN SHOULD HAVE [illegible] AND [illegible] BEFORE YOU REACHED LADY [illegible].
MAYBE THEY WOULD HAVE MR. MURTHWAITE... IF I HADN'T ARRIVED FOUR HOURS EARLY.
I BEG TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON THAT PROCEEDING, YOU ARE A LUCKY MAN.
IN THE COUNTRY THOSE MEN CAME FROM... THEY CARE JUST AS MUCH ABOUT KILLING A MAN--
--AS YOU CARE ABOUT EMPTYING THE ASHES OUT OF YOUR PIPE.
IF A THOUSAND LIVES STOOD BETWEEN THEM AND THE GETTING BACK OF THEIR DIAMOND--
--THEY WOULD TAKE THEM ALL!

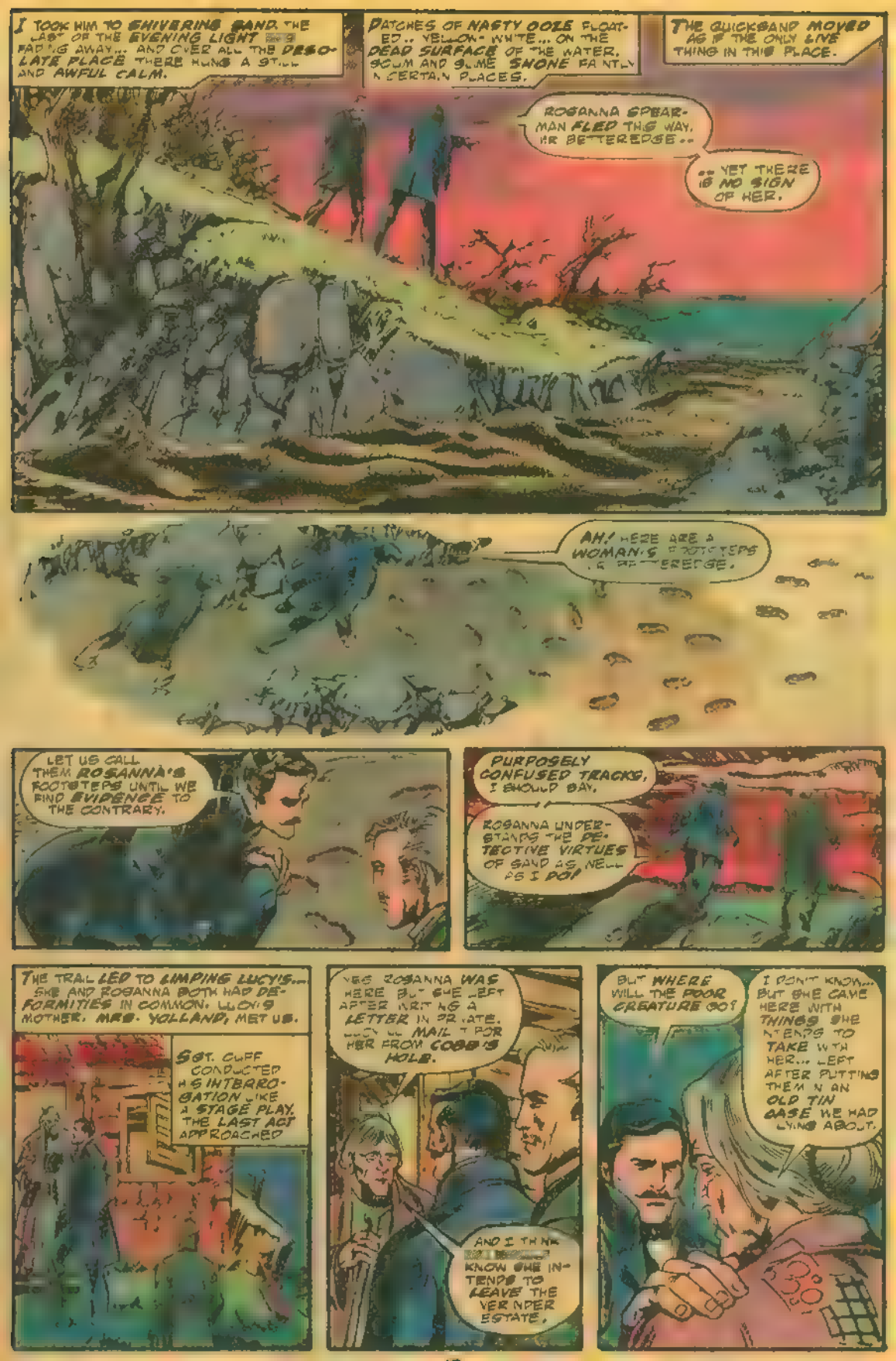

FATHER! COME UP STAIRS, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
THE DIAMOND IS GONE!
SUPERINTENDENT SEEGRAVE ARRIVED AT THE HALL BY MOTOR-TAXI. HE MANAGED TO MAKE ALL THE SERVANTS FEEL LIKE SUSPECTS SIMULTANEOUSLY WHEN HE GLARED AT THEM ONE AND ALL. HE SAMPLED THE STATE OF MRS. RICHELD'S NOOK WITH DECORATIVE PAINT WHICH MUST HAVE BEEN IN ONE OF THESE PETTY STATES BEFORE ONE HE PERSONALLY HAD REACHED AGAINST THE PAINTED KITCHEN DOORWAY.
BUT HE DID NOT FIND THE DIAMOND STRANGELY MISSING BEFORE THE THEFT RICHEL AND MR. FRANKLIN HAD SEEMED TO GET ON FAMOUSLY, NOW SHE HAS OPENLY HOSTILE TOWARD HIM. MOST OF THE TIME SHE KEPT TO HERSELF - LOCKED IN HER ROOM. MOST STRANGE ATTITUDE.
SHE WAS EVEN MORE AGGRAVATED AT HIS PRESENCE WHEN HE HAD THE CELEBRATED DETECTIVE, SGT. CUFF - SUMMONED TO SOLVE THE STRANGE THEFT OF THE LOCKSTONE.
HE HAD TRIMMED ALL RECENT BLACK INTO A NEAT CRAVAT ROUND HIS NECK. HIS EYES, GREY STEELY GREY, HAD A VERY DISCONCERTING TRICK WHEN THEY SHOT ACROSS YOUR EYES, OF LOOKING AS IF THEY EXPECTED SOMETHING MORE FROM YOU THAN YOU WERE AWARE OF YOURSELF. HIS LONG WANKY FINGERS WERE HOOKED LIKE CLAWS.
IF HALF THE STORIES I HAVE HEARD ARE TRUE—
—WHEN IT COMES TO UNRAVELING A MYSTERY THERE ISN'T THE EQUAL IN ENGLAND OF SGT. CUFF!
IS THIS THE LADY VERINDER'S?
YES, SIR.
I AM
SGT. CUFF.

BEAUTIFUL ROSES YOU HAVE HERE, BETTERIDGE.
ARE YOU FOND OF FLOWERS, SGT. CUFF?
I HAVEN'T MUCH TIME TO BE FOND OF ANYTHING--
-- BUT, WHEN I HAVE A MOMENT'S FONDNESS TO BESTOW... THE ROSES GET IT.
I BEGAN MY LIFE AMONG THEM IN MY FATHER'S NURSERY GARDEN...
-- AND I SHALL END MY LIFE AMONG THEM IF I CAN.
IT SEEMS AN ODD TASTE SIR, FOR A MAN IN YOUR LINE OF LIFE.
IF YOU WILL LOOK ABOUT YOU (WHICH MOST PEOPLE WON'T DO) YOU WILL SEE THAT A MAN'S TASTES ARE OFTEN THE OPPOSITE OF A MAN'S BUSINESS.
SHOW ME TWO THINGS MORE OPPOSITE THAN A ROSE AND A THIEF... AND I'LL CORRECT MY TASTES ACCORDINGLY.
SUPERINTENDENT SEEGRAVE... HOW DO I A PAINT SMEAR COME TO BE HERE ON RACHEL VERINDER'S DOORWAY?
THE WOMAN-SERVANTS PETTICOATS DO IT THE MORE SO I INVESTIGATED THE CRIME--
-- BUT SURELY, IT'S ONLY A MERE TRIFLE... A MERE TRIFLE.
IN ALL MY EXPERIENCE ALONG THE DIRTIER WAYS OF THIS PRETTY LITTLE WORLD--
I HAVE NEVER MET WITH SUCH A THING AS A TRIFLE YET.

BEFORE WE GO A STEP FARTHER IN THIS [illegible] THE PETTICOAT THAT MADE THE SMEAR--
--AND WE MUST KNOW FOR CERTAIN WHEN THAT PAINT WAS WET.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THE LAST BIT OF DOORWAY IN THE KITCHEN WAS PAINTED, MR. FRANKLIN?
I MYSELF COMPLETED IT BY THREE IN THE AFTERNOON. IT DRIES WITHIN TWELVE HOURS.
WHICH MEANS, SOMEONE SCRAPED AGAINST IT DURING THE [illegible] THE NEXT DAY SEEGRAVE-- THE PAINT WAS EIGHT HOURS DRY BY THE TIME YOU ARRIVED TO--
INVESTIGATE.
ARE YOU ANOTHER POLICE OFFICER?
I AM SGT CUFF, MISS, OF THE DETECTIVE POLICE.
DO YOU THINK A YOUNG LADY'S ADVICE WORTH HAVING?
I SHALL BE GLAD TO HEAR IT, MISS.
DO YOUR DUTY BY YOURSELF--
--AND DON'T ALLOW MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE TO HELP YOU!
THE SGT STOOD AT THE WINDOW WHISTLING THE TUNE OF THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER. I DISCOVERED THAT HE ONLY WHISTLED WHEN HIS MIND WAS HARD AT WORK; SEEING THE WAY INCH BY INCH TO ITS OWN PRIVATE ENDS.
HE ALWAYS WHISTLED LAST ROSE OF SUMMER. IT REMINDED HIM OF HIS FAVORITE ROSES... AND, AS HE WHISTLED IT... IT WAS THE MOST MELANCHOLY TUNE GOING.
THE PERSON MADE THAT SMEAR BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND THREE IN THE MORNING... AND THE BED CLOTHES WITH THE SMEAR AND CLOSE TO THE HAND THAT HAS THE DIAMOND!
CAN YOU GUESS YET WHO HAS STOLEN THE DIAMOND?
NOBODY HAS STOLEN THE DIAMOND!
BUT WAIT A LITTLE... THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE ARE NOT ALL PUT TOGETHER YET.

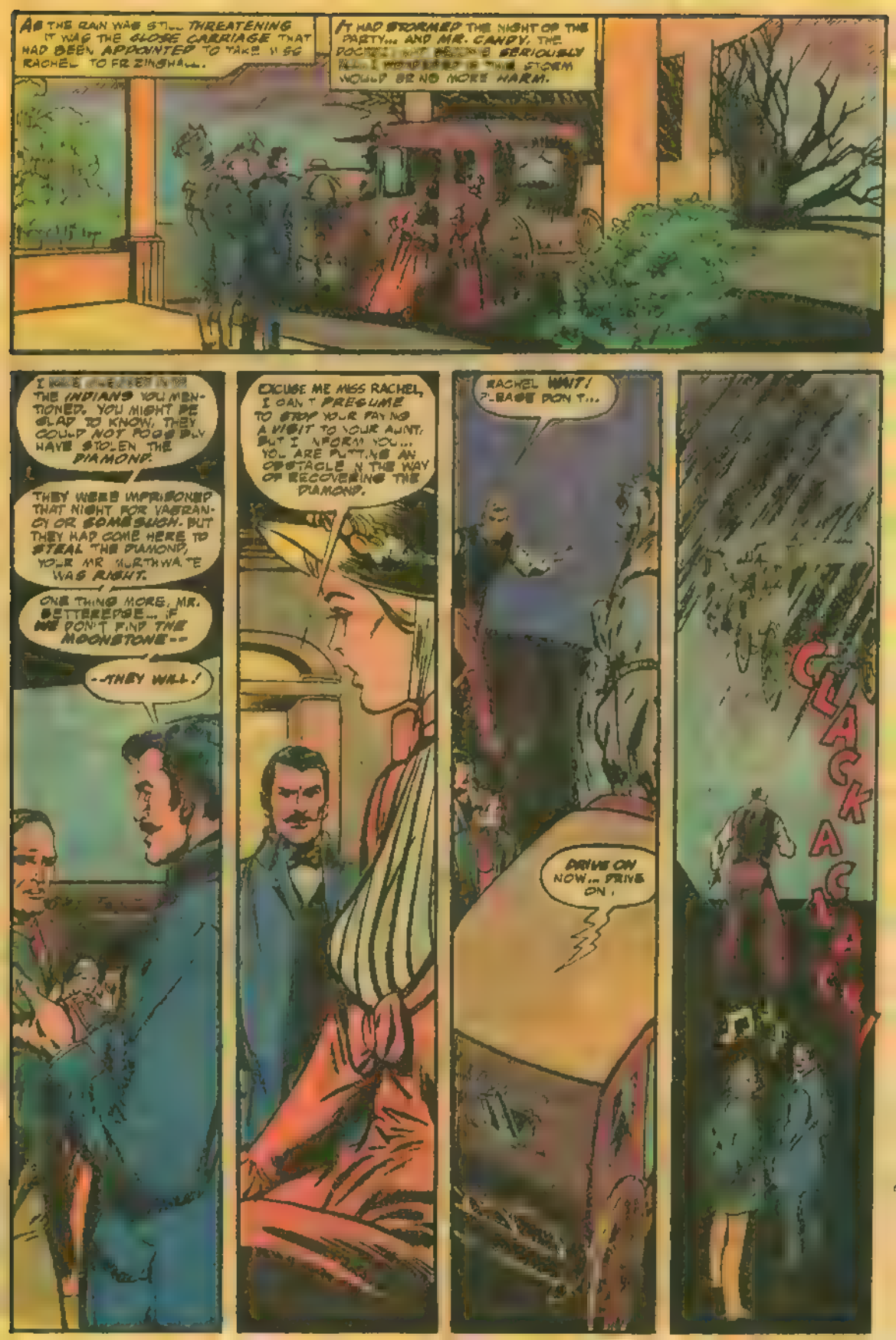
SUPERINTENDENT BEEGRAVE HAS DONE A WORLD OF HARM TO THIS INQUIRY BY LETTING THE SERVANTS SEE THAT
I HAVE A PLAN TO MEET THE DIFFICULTY.
IF I CAN TELL THEM I AM GOING TO EXAMINE THE WARDROBES OF EVERYBODY... FROM HER LADYSHIP DOWNWARD--
-- THE SERVANTS WILL ACCEPT IT AS EVEN DEALING BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR BETTERS -- AND THUS THEY WILL NOT HINDER THE CASE
IF IT IS A NECESSITY ... YOU MAY GO SO.
DEAR AUNT JULIA, I AM ABOUT TO LEAVE.
I AM SORRY TO PUT YOU TO ANY INCONVENIENCE, FOR A MERE FORMALITY MR ABLEWHITE
-- BUT BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE WOULD YOU MIND IF WE CHECK YOUR CLOTHING? AH THANK YOU I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T MIND.
BEFORE I BEGIN THIS SEARCH, YOUR LADYSHIP, COULD YOU HAVE THE HOUSEHOLD WASHING BOOK SENT TO ME... THE STAINED ARTICLE OF DRESS MAYBE AN ARTICLE OF LINEN.
ROSANNA... PLEASE GET THE WASHING BOOK FOR THE GOT.
HAS THE YOUNG WOMAN YOU SENT TO GET THE BOOK BEEN IN YOUR EMPLOYMENT LONG?
WHY DO YOU ASK?
THE LAST TIME I SAW HER .. SHE WAS IN PRISON... FOR THEFT.
YOU DON'T SUSPECT ROSANNA I HOPE?
I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOUR LADYSHIP THAT I DON'T SUSPECT ANY PERSON IN THE HOUSE OF THIEVING... UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.
BUT COME, SIR, LET US HAVE OUR SEARCH SO YOU MIGHT BE ON YOUR WAY.
MR. BLAKE.
ROSANNA .. YOU .. YOU STARTLED ME.
THEY WILL NEVER FIND THE DIAMOND, SIR, WILL THEY?
NO!.. NOR THE PERSON WHO TOOK IT... I'LL ANSWER FOR THAT.

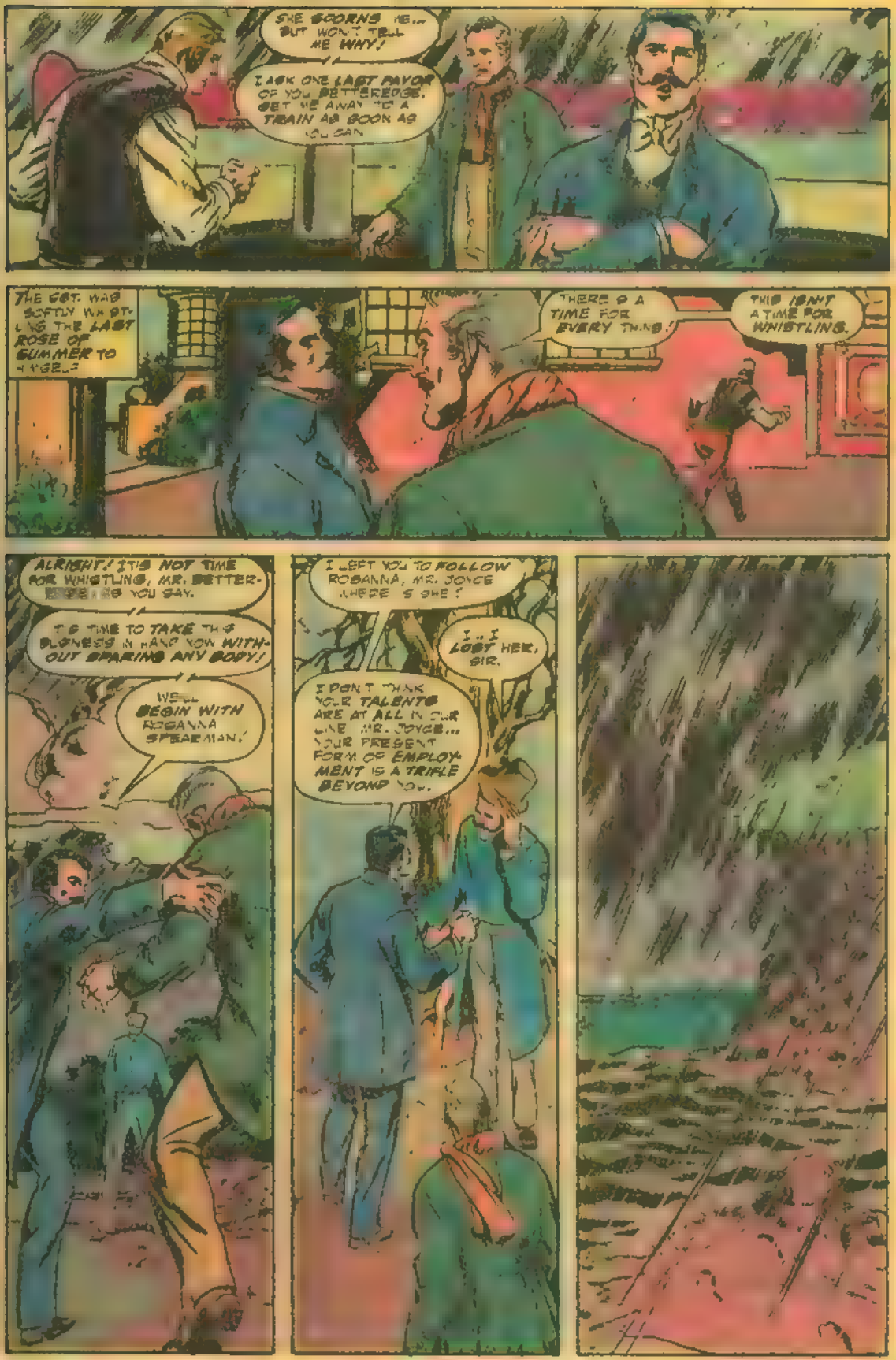
MY LADY JULIA SHORTLY INFORMED ME THAT MISS RACHEL REFUSED TO HAVE HER WARDROBE SEARCHED SOPHISTICATED AS SHE HAD DEPARTED, AND SGT. CUFF WHOM I WATCHED WARILY AND I WALKED THE SHRUBBERY PATH.
WE WON'T ENTER INTO YOUR YOUNG LADY RACHEL'S MOTIVES... WE WILL ONLY SAY IT'S A PITY SHE DECLINES TO HELP ME.
WE MUST NOW TRY TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF THE SMEAR ON THE DOOR... WHICH MEANS THE MYSTERY OF THE DIAMOND ALSO
I HAVE DECIDED TO SEE THE SERVANTS AND TO SEARCH THEIR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS... INSTEAD OF SEARCHING THEIR WARDROBES.
WERE ANY OF THE SERVANTS UNEXPECTEDLY OUT OF TEMPER?
I HESI--
WAIT.
HOST CURIOUS.
BETTERIDGE, ABOUT THAT YOUNG WOMAN, ROSANNA SPEARMAN... IT ISN'T VERY LIKELY.. WITH HER PERSONAL APPEARANCE... THAT SHE HAS GOT A LOVER, HAS SHE?
I'M SURE, I MEANS NOTHING... BUT SHE HAS ACTED ODDLY WHEN ABOUT MR. FRANKLIN.
THE FALLING IN LOVE WITH A GENTLEMAN OF MR. FRANKLIN'S MANNERS DOESN'T SEEM TO ME THE ODDEST PART OF HER CONDUCT.
I LIKE TO BE TENDER TO HUMAN INFIRMITY... THOUGH I DON'T GET MANY CHANCES OF EXERCISING THAT VIRTUE
THE UGLY WOMEN HAVE A BAD TIME OF IT IN THIS WORLD... LET'S HOPE IT WILL BE MADE UP TO THEM IN ANOTHER.
SGT CUFF I HAD A STRANGE TALK WITH ROSANNA.
AH, YES, ROSANNA! SHE DOES SEEM TO BE THE TOPIC TODAY. I HAVE ALSO LEARNED THAT THE DAY AFTER THE ROBBERY -- SHE SLIPPED AWAY FROM THE ESTATE --
-- AND CREPT INTO TOWN... TO JUST... NO LESS... A LINEN SHOP! LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT ROSANNA'S FAVORITE WALK BETTERIDGE.

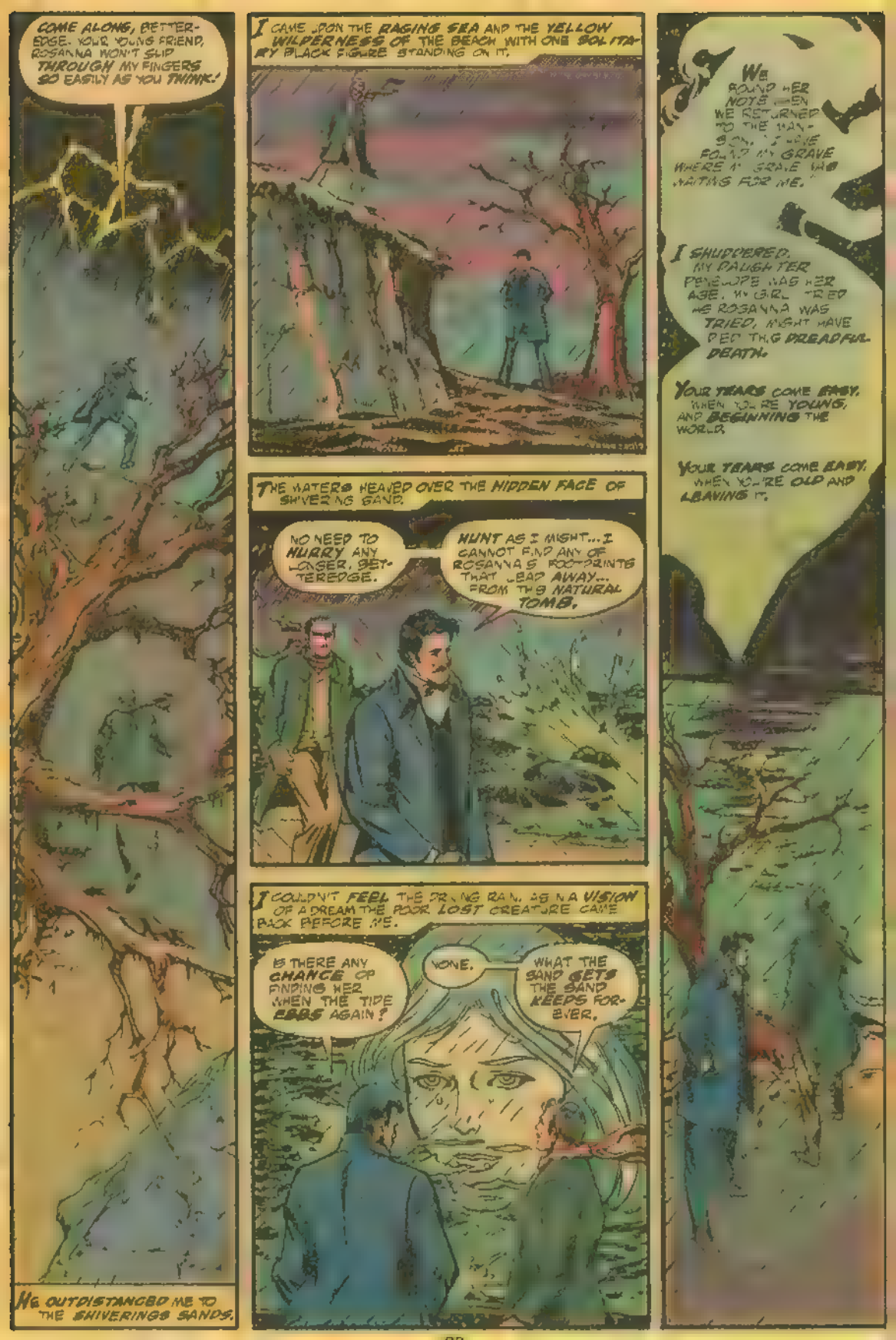

I TOOK HIM TO SHIVERING SAND, THE LAST OF THE EVENING LIGHT FADING AWAY... AND OVER ALL THE DESOLATE PLACE THERE HUNG A STILL AND AWFUL CALM.
PATCHES OF NASTY OOZE FLOATED.. YELLOW-WHITE... ON THE DEAD SURFACE OF THE WATER. SCUM AND SLIME SHONE FAINTLY IN CERTAIN PLACES.
THE QUICKSAND MOVED AS IF THE ONLY LIVE THING IN THIS PLACE.
ROSANNA SPEARMAN FLED THIS WAY, MR BETTERIDGE..
.. YET THERE IS NO SIGN OF HER.
AH! HERE ARE A WOMAN'S FOOTSTEPS MR BETTERIDGE.
LET US CALL THEM ROSANNA'S FOOTSTEPS UNTIL WE FIND EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY.
PURPOSELY CONFUSED TRACKS, I SHOULD SAY.
ROSANNA UNDERSTANDS THE PROTECTIVE VIRTUES OF SAND AS WELL AS I DO!
THE TRAIL LED TO LIMPING LUCY'S... SHE AND ROSANNA BOTH HAD DEFORMITIES IN COMMON. LUCY'S MOTHER, MRS. YOLLAND, MET US.
SGT. CUFF CONDUCTED HIS INTERROGATION LIKE A STAGE PLAY. THE LAST ACT APPROACHED
YES ROSANNA WAS HERE BUT SHE LEFT AFTER WRITING A LETTER IN PRIVATE. LUCY WAS TO MAIL IT FOR HER FROM COBB'S HOLE.
AND I THINK I KNOW SHE INTENDS TO LEAVE THE VERNDER ESTATE.
BUT WHERE WILL THE POOR CREATURE GO?
I DON'T KNOW... BUT SHE CAME HERE WITH THINGS SHE INTENDS TO TAKE WITH HER... LEFT AFTER PUTTING THEM IN AN OLD TIN CASE WE HAD LYING ABOUT.
30

AS WE WALKED BACK TO SHIVERING BAND, I THOUGHT I KNEW WHAT ROSANNA HAD D" INTO THE TIN BOX
CAN T YOU GUESS WHAT SHE H D ? THE MOONSTONE!
IT'S NOT THE D AMOND THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE .S AT FAULT IF ROSANNA HAS THE D AMOND
THEN TO THE STAINED DRESS, SHE'S SECRETED! ANYTHING TH INTO THAT BLICK-BAND NEVER O-RFACES AGAIN.
BUT WHY HIDE T BETTER-EDGE ?
A STONE WE GHTED IN THE CLOTH AN T IS GOING FOREVER. SHE WANTS TO PRESERVE WHATEVER S.S - DDEN.
BUT WHY ?
AH!
WE RETURNED TO THE HOUSE TO LEARN MY LADY JULIA HAD BEEN WAITING FOR OUR PRESENCE WAITING WITH MOST SHOCKING NEWS, I MUST ADD.
RACHEL, NTENDS TO LEAVE ON THE ROW... TO STAY WITH HER AUNT.
GOODNIGHT, SET.
I SHOULDN T BE SURPRISED P A SCANDAL WAS TO BURST UPON THIS HOUSE!
DAMN YOU!
THERE S SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT H SE RACHEL... AND YOU HAVE BEEN HIDING T PROY FROM ME ALL TH S TIME!
I TAKE NO OFFENSE AT YOUR HOT CHS BETTEREDGE P TS ANY COMFORT, COLLAR ME AGA N.
I SUSPECT YOUR YOUNG LADY RACHEL HAS STOLEN HER OWN DIAMOND.. AND HAS TAKEN ROSANNA INTO HER CONFI-
I AM SORRY, BEITEREDGE... TRULY, SORRY.

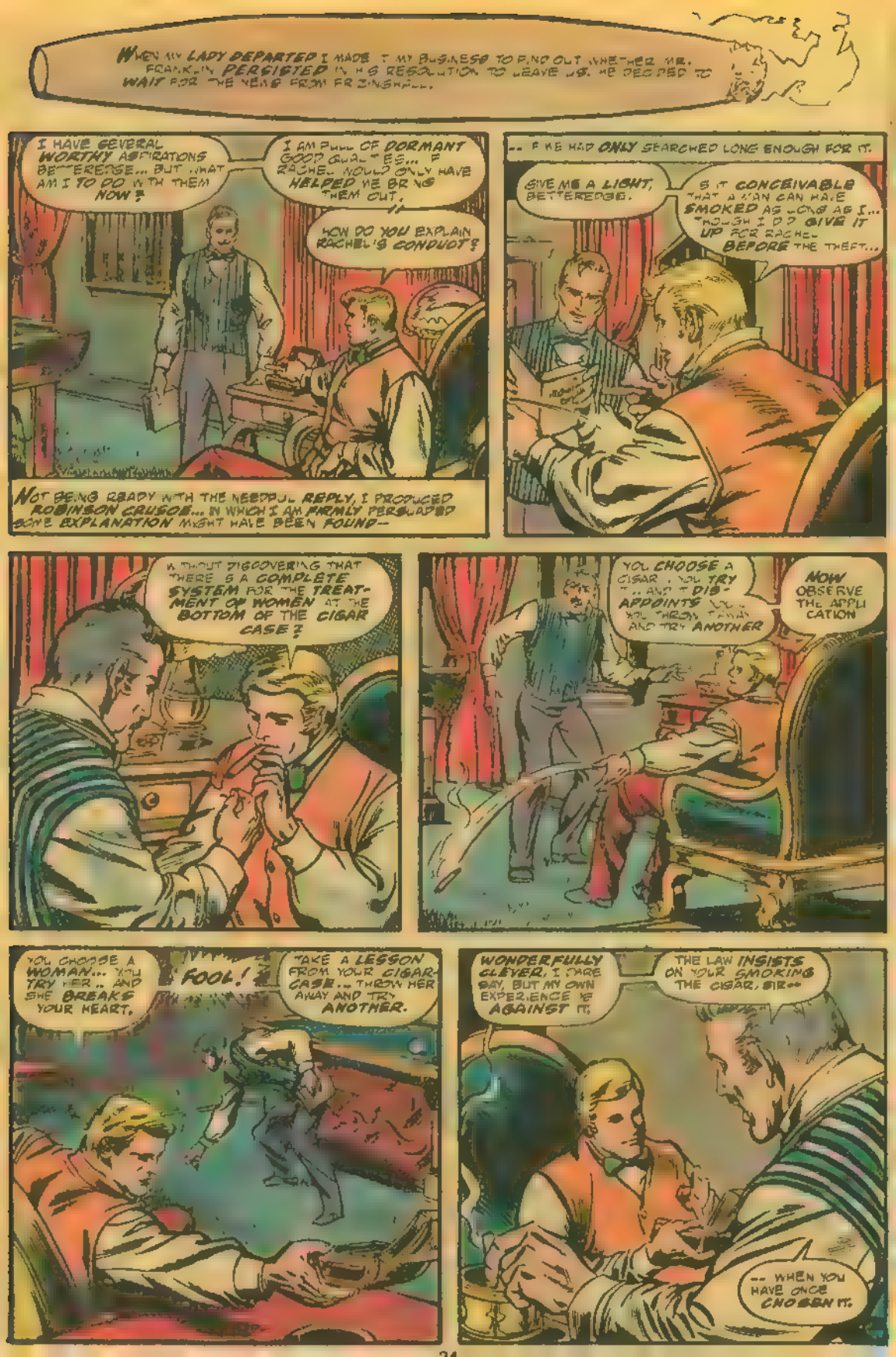
YOU... YOU STARTLED ME, ROSANNA? WHAT IS IT? DID YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO ME?
YES... IF I DARE.
I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND YOU. IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT ME TO DO?
HE LOOKS AT BILLIARD BALLS/ ANYTHING RATHER THAN LOOK AT--
ME!
WHY ARE YOU NOT IN A PROPER BED, SGT. CUFF?
WHY ARE YOU STAKED OUTSIDE RACHEL'S ROOM? EXPLAIN YOURSELF SIR!
THERE WAS A COINCIDENCE BETWEEN ROSANNA'S MISSION TO THE QUICKSAND AND RACHEL'S DECISION TO LEAVE.
WHATEVER ROSANNA MAY HAVE HIDDEN--
-- IT'S CLEAR YOUR [illegible] COULDN'T GO AWAY UNTIL SHE KNEW IT WAS HIDDEN. WELL, ROSANNA WILL HAVE TROUBLE TELLING HER THE NEWS WITH ME HERE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?


AS THE RAIN WAS STILL THREATENING IT WAS THE GLORE CARRIAGE THAT HAD BEEN APPOINTED TO TAKE MISS RACHEL TO FRIZINGHALL.
IT HAD STORMED THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY... AND MR. CANDY, THE DOCTOR, HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY ILL. I HOPED THAT THIS STORM WOULD BE NO MORE HARM.
THE INDIANS YOU MENTIONED, YOU MIGHT BE GLAD TO KNOW, THEY COULD NOT POSSIBLY HAVE STOLEN THE DIAMOND.
THEY WERE IMPRISONED THAT NIGHT FOR VAGRANCY OR SOMESUCH. BUT THEY HAD COME HERE TO STEAL THE DIAMOND, YOUR MR. NORTHWAITE WAS RIGHT.
ONE THING MORE, MR. BETTERIDGE... IF WE DON'T FIND THE MOONSTONE--
--THEY WILL!
EXCUSE ME MISS RACHEL, I CAN'T PRESUME TO STOP YOUR PAYING A VISIT TO YOUR AUNT, BUT I INFORM YOU... YOU ARE PUTTING AN OBSTACLE IN THE WAY OF RECOVERING THE DIAMOND.
RACHEL WAIT! I-RAGE DON'T...
DRIVE ON NOW... DRIVE ON!
CLACK
CLACK

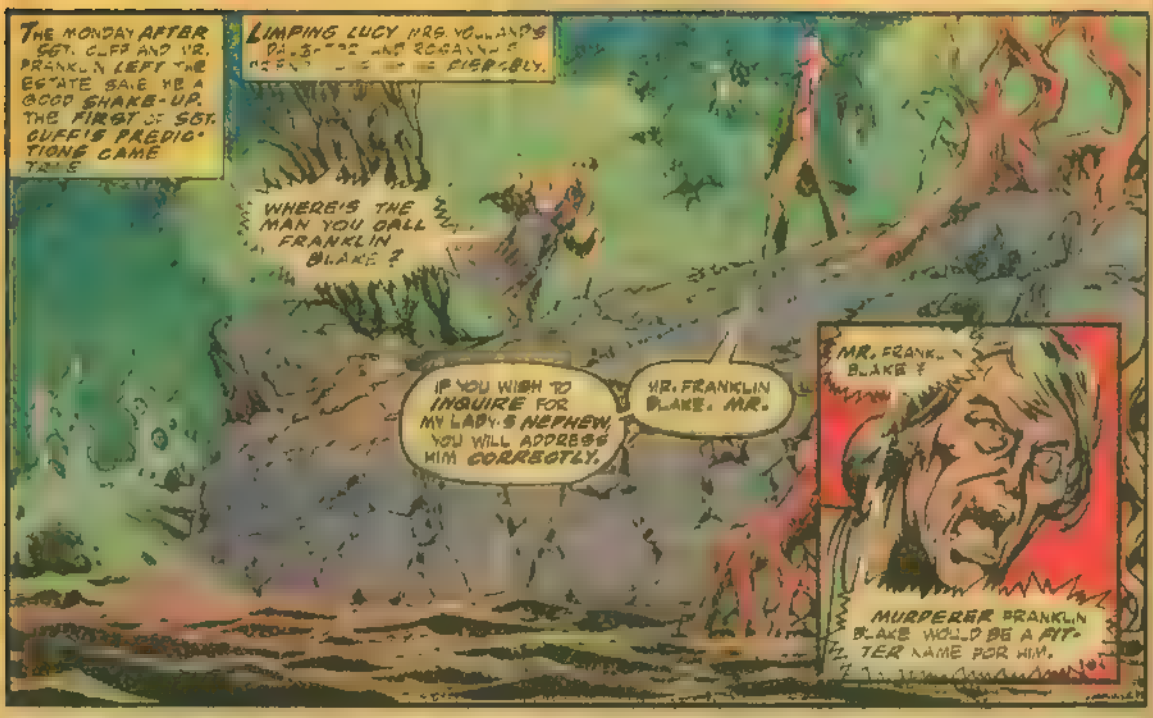

SHE SCORNS ME... BUT WON'T TELL ME WHY!
I ASK ONE LAST FAVOR OF YOU BETTERIDGE, GET ME AWAY TO A TRAIN AS SOON AS YOU CAN.
THERE'S A TIME FOR EVERY THING!
THIS ISN'T A TIME FOR WHISTLING.
ALRIGHT! IT'S NOT TIME FOR WHISTLING, MR. BETTERIDGE AS YOU SAY.
IT'S TIME TO TAKE THE BUSINESS IN HAND YOU WITHOUT SPARING ANY BODY!
WELL BEGIN WITH ROSANNA SPEARMAN!
I LEFT YOU TO FOLLOW ROSANNA, MR. JOYCE WHERE'S SHE?
I... I LOST HER, SIR.
I DON'T THINK YOUR TALENTS ARE AT ALL IN OUR LINE MR. JOYCE... YOUR PRESENT FORM OF EMPLOYMENT IS A TRIFLE BEYOND YOU.


COME ALONG, BETTEREDGE. YOUR YOUNG FRIEND, ROSANNA WON'T SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS SO EASILY AS YOU THINK!
HE OUTDISTANCED ME TO THE SHIVERING SANDS.
I CAME UPON THE RAGING SEA AND THE YELLOW WILDERNESS OF THE BEACH WITH ONE SOLITARY BLACK FIGURE STANDING ON IT.
THE WATERS HEAVED OVER THE HIDDEN FACE OF SHIVERING SAND.
NO NEED TO HURRY ANY LONGER, BETTEREDGE.
HUNT AS I MIGHT... I CANNOT FIND ANY OF ROSANNA'S FOOTPRINTS THAT LEAD AWAY... FROM THE NATURAL TOMB.
I COULDN'T FEEL THE DRIVING RAIN, AS IN A VISION OF A DREAM THE POOR LOST CREATURE CAME BACK BEFORE ME.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE OF FINDING HER WHEN THE TIDE EBBS AGAIN?
NONE.
WHAT THE SAND GETS THE SAND KEEPS FOREVER.
WE FOUND HER NOT SEEN WE RETURNED TO THE MANSION. I HAVE FOUND MY GRAVE WHERE A GRAVE WAS WAITING FOR ME.
I SHUDDERED. MY DAUGHTER PENELOPE WAS HER AGE. MY GIRL TRIED WE ROSANNA WAS TRIED, MIGHT HAVE PED THE DREADFUL DEATH.
YOUR TEARS COME EASY. WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG, AND BEGINNING THE WORLD.
YOUR TEARS COME EASY. WHEN YOU'RE OLD AND LEAVING IT.

M... MET THE GAZE... EYE THAT... STEADY... FAMILY SPIRIT... SELF IN EVERY LINE OF HER FACE.
YOU SUSPECT MY DAUGHTER RACHEL OF DECEIVING US ALL BY SECRETING THE DIAMOND FOR SOME PURPOSE OF HER OWN?
TO BE BLUNT, MY LADY... YES.
FOR THE LAST 20 YEARS I HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED IN CASES OF FAMILY SCANDAL. IT IS NEVER IN THAN IN MY EXPERIENCE THAT YOUNG LADIES OF RANK AND POSITION--
OFTEN HAVE PRIVATE DEBTS WHICH THEY... DARE NOT... ACKNOWLEDGE TO THEIR NEAREST RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
SOMETIMES THE MONEY IS WANTED FOR PURPOSES WHICH I DON'T SUSPECT IN THIS CASE--
--AND WHICH I WON'T SHOCK YOU BY MENTIONING.
RACHEL BETRAYS AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE RESENTMENT AGAINST MR BLAKE AND MYSELF...
--THE TWO PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN TRYING TO HELP HER RECOVER HER LOST SENSE...
BUT WHY?
I LOOK BACK INTO MY OWN MIND FOR THE ANSWERS.
IT TELLS ME SHE HAS DEBTS THE PARENT ACKNOWLEDGE... AND IT SETS ME TO ASKING IF THE DIAMOND MIGHT NOT BE PLEDGED TO PAY THOSE DEBTS.
NOW THEN... WHO WOULD BE THE PERSON TO HELP MISS LEADER IN RAISING MONEY PRIVATELY ON THE DIAMOND?
A GO-BETWEEN... ROSANNA SPEARMAN!
I WANT YOU TO GO TO HER AUNTS... AND SHOCK HER!
I WANT YOU TO TELL YOUR DAUGHTER... WITHOUT WARNING... OF ROSANNA'S DEATH... AND SEE IF THAT SHOCK WILL FORCE HER TO...
CONFESS.


WHEN MY LADY DEPARTED I MADE IT MY BUSINESS TO FIND OUT WHETHER MR. FRANKLIN PERSISTED IN HIS RESOLUTION TO LEAVE US. HE DECIDED TO WAIT FOR THE NEWS FROM FRINGHALL.
I HAVE SEVERAL WORTHY ASPIRATIONS BETTERIDGE... BUT WHAT AM I TO DO WITH THEM NOW?
I AM FULL OF DORMANT GOOD QUALITIES... RACHEL WOULD ONLY HAVE HELPED ME BRING THEM OUT.
HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN RACHEL'S CONDUCT?
NOT BEING READY WITH THE NEEDFUL REPLY, I PRODUCED ROBINSON CRUSOE... IN WHICH I AM FIRMLY PERSUADED SOME EXPLANATION MIGHT HAVE BEEN FOUND--
-- IF HE HAD ONLY SEARCHED LONG ENOUGH FOR IT.
GIVE ME A LIGHT, BETTERIDGE.
IS IT CONCEIVABLE THAT A MAN CAN HAVE SMOKED AS LONG AS I... THOUGH I DID GIVE IT UP FOR RACHEL BEFORE THE THEFT...
WITHOUT DISCOVERING THAT THERE IS A COMPLETE SYSTEM FOR THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CIGAR CASE?
YOU CHOOSE A CIGAR - YOU TRY IT - AND IT DISAPPOINTS YOU - YOU THROW IT AWAY AND TRY ANOTHER
NOW OBSERVE THE APPLICATION
YOU CHOOSE A WOMAN... YOU TRY HER... AND SHE BREAKS YOUR HEART.
FOOL!
TAKE A LESSON FROM YOUR CIGAR CASE... THROW HER AWAY AND TRY ANOTHER.
WONDERFULLY CLEVER, I DARE SAY, BUT MY OWN EXPERIENCE IS AGAINST IT.
THE LAW INSISTS ON YOUR SMOKING THE CIGAR, SIR--
-- WHEN YOU HAVE ONCE CHOSEN IT.

My Good Gabriel
I dessert you will inform Sgt. Cuff that I have performed the promise I made to him; with this result, so far, as Rosanna Spearman is concerned. Miss Verinder solemnly declares that she has never spoken a word in private to Rosanna. After telling my daughter, suddenly, of Rosanna's suicide... this is what came of it. You may tell the Sgt. he is dismissed from the case.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?
I SHOULD ONLY OFFEND YOU IF I EXPRESSED MY OPINION.
HER LADYSHIP HAS SMOOTHED MATTERS OVER FOR THE PRESENT... BUT THE FAMILY SCANDAL IS OF THE SORT THAT BURSTS UP AGAIN WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT.
WE SHALL HAVE MORE DETECTIVE BUSINESS ON OUR HANDS, SIR, BEFORE THE MOONSTONE IS MANY MONTHS OLDER.
[redacted] OPINION BUT!
I DECLARE TO HEAVEN, BETTERIDGE — TO SAY YOU ARE AS TRANSPARENT AS A CHILD, SIR IS TO PAY THE CHILDREN A COMPLIMENT THEY OFTEN DON'T DESERVE.
I — ONLY TURN PROPHET FOR YOUR SAKE.
FIRST... YOU WILL HEAR SOMETHING FROM THE YOLLANDS... WHEN THE POST'MAN DELIVERS ROSANNA'S LETTER FROM COBB'S HOLE.
SECOND... YOU WILL HEAR OF THE THREE INDIANS AGAIN.
THIRD, AND LAST... YOU WILL SOONER OR LATER, HEAR SOMETHING OF A MONEY LENDER IN LONDON... NAME OF MR. SEPTIMUS LUKER.
TIME WILL SHOW WHETHER I AM RIGHT OR WRONG...
IN THE MEANWHILE SIR, I CARRY AWAY WITH ME A SINCERE PERSONAL LIKING FOR YOU...
-- WHICH I THINK DOES HONOR TO BOTH OF US.


THE MONDAY AFTER SGT. CUFF AND MR. FRANKLIN LEFT THE ESTATE SALE HE A GOOD SHAKE-UP. THE FIRST OF SGT. CUFF'S PREDICTIONS CAME TRUE
LIMPING LUCY MRS. YOLLAND'S [illegible] AND ROSANNA'S [illegible] FIERCELY.
WHERE'S THE MAN YOU CALL FRANKLIN BLAKE?
IF YOU WISH TO INQUIRE FOR MY LADY'S NEPHEW, YOU WILL ADDRESS HIM CORRECTLY.
MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE. MR.
MR. FRANK... BLAKE?
MURDERER FRANKLIN BLAKE WOULD BE A FITTER NAME FOR HIM.

HE HAS BEEN THE DEATH OF ROSANNA SPEARMAN.
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT LUCY?
WHAT DO YOU CARE? WHAT DOES ANY MAN CARE? IF ONLY SHE THOUGHT OF MEN AS I DO... SHE MIGHT BE LIVING NOW.
I LOVED HER. VILE PEOPLE AND ILL-TREATED HER. SHE GOT HAVE BEEN HAPPY WITH ME.
I HAD A PLAN FOR OUR GOING TO LONDON TOGETHER LIKE SISTERS... AND THEN HE CAME HERE AND SPOKED IT ALL!
WHERE IS THIS GENTLEMAN THAT I "LOVE" SPEAK OF EXCEPT WITH RESPECT?
THE DAY IS NOT FAR OFF WHEN THE POOR WILL RISE AGAINST THE RICH. I PRAY HEAVEN THEY BEGIN WITH HIM.
TELL FRANKLIN BLAKE I HAVE A LETTER FOR HIM... FROM ROSANNA.
AND TELL HIM... I HATE HIM! IF HE WANTS THE LETTER... HE MUST COME BACK HERE AND GET IT FROM ME.

SATURDAY, the last day of the week, is also the last DAY of my narrative. It is also the day the rest of SGT. CUFF'S PREDICTIONS came TRUE.

A newspaper article carried this account.

"LAMBETH–shortly before the closing of the court, MR. SEPTIMUS LUKER, the well-known DEALER in ANCIENT GEMS, claimed he had been annoyed by THREE INDIANS who threatened him.

WE have gone on, in this matter of the MOONSTONE, from one Marvel to another, to END with Sgt. Cuff's amazing predictions coming true WITHIN the week.

Please to excuse the FAULTS of this composition–my talking so much of myself, and being too FAMILIAR.

I am AFRAID, with you.

May you FIND in MY WRITING what Robinson Crusoe found in his EXPERIENCE on desert isles... "Something to COMFORT yourselves from, and to set, in the description of GOOD AND EVIL, on the CREDIT SIDE OF THE ACCOUNT."

FARFWELL.

SECOND PERIOD
THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH
(1848-1849)
THE EVENTS RELATED IN SEVERAL NARRATIVES

FIRST NARRATIVE

CONTRIBUTED BY MISS CLACK, NIECE OF THE LATE SIR JOHN VERINDER

I AM INDEBTED TO MY DEAR PARENTS (BOTH NOW IN HEAVEN) FOR HAVING HAD HABITS OF ORDER AND REGULARITY INSTILLED INTO ME AT A VERY EARLY AGE.

I HAVE BEEN CUT OFF FROM THE PROSPEROUS BRANCH OF THE FAMILY FROM QUITE TIME. WHEN WE ARE SOLATED AND POOR. WE ARE NOT UNFREQUENTLY FORGOTTEN.

I FIND MY INSIGNIFICANT EXISTENCE SUDDENLY REMEMBERED BY MY WEALTHY RELATIVE... MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE.

THE WHIM HAS SEIZED HIM TO STIR UP THE DEPLORABLE SCANDAL OF THE MOONSTONE... AND I AM TO HELP HIM BY WRITING THE ACCOUNT OF WHAT I WITNESSED AT AUNT VERINDER'S HOUSE IN LONDON.

MY DIARY INFORMS ME THAT I PASSED AUNT VERINDER'S HOUSE ON MONDAY 3rd JULY, 1848... SHORTLY AFTER I HAD LEARNED WHAT BEFELL MY WOMAN'S SOCIETY'S AID, MR. GODFREY ABLEWHITE. POOR MR. ABLEWHITE AFTER A MEETING WITH MR. SEPTIMUS LUKER, WAS LURED BY NOTE TO A STRANGE RESIPENCE.

HE NOTICED AN UNUSUAL ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPT...

-- WHEN WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST PREVIOUS NOISE TO WARN HIM--

HE HAD JUST TIME TO NOTICE THAT THE ARM ROUND HIS NECK WAS NAKED AND TAWNY-BROWN BEFORE HE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS.

HE WAS THEN BRUTALLY SEARCHED--

-- AND HAD NO IDEA, WHEN HE AWOKE, WHY HE HAD BEEN ATTACKED OR SEARCHED. SUCH A BEAUTIFUL MAN TREATED IN SUCH AN UNCHRISTIAN WAY. IT IS PAINFUL TO RECOUNT.

I WAS PUNCTUAL TO THE LUNCHEON-HOUR AT AUNT ERINDER'S HOUSE, BEING RACHEL, I WONDERED HOW SO INSIGNIFICANT-LOOKING A PERSON SHOULD BE THE CHILD OF SIR JOHN AND LADY VERNEY.

THERE WAS AN ABSENCE OF LADY-LIKE RESTRAINT IN HER MANNERS AND MANNERS.

GODFREY, HERE THINKS WE ALL MAKE TOO MUCH OF THE ATTACK ON H... OR ON THE ASSAULT WHICH HAPPENED TO MR. SEPTIMUS LUKER ON THE VERY NEXT DAY.

IMAGINE SUCH UNCHRISTIAN ACTS!

WHY DO YOU CHOOSE NOT TO SPEAK OF YOUR ATTACK?

RACHEL, DARLING, TRUE GREATNESS AND TRUE COURAGE ARE EVER MODEST.

YOU ARE A VERY GOOD FELLOW IN YOUR WAY, GODFREY... BUT I AM QUITE SURE YOU ARE NOT GREAT ... I DON'T BELIEVE YOU POSSESS ANY EXTRA-ORDINARY COURAGE--

-- AND I AM FIRMLY PERSUADED... IF YOU EVER HAD ANY MODESTY... THAT YOUR LADY-WORSHIPPERS RELIEVED YOU OF THAT VIRTUE A GOOD MANY YEARS SINCE.

IT IS THOUGHT... IS IT NOT?... THAT THESE THREE INDIANS ARE THE SAME WHO CAME TO OUR HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY?

SOME PEOPLE THINK SO.

AND MR. LUKER WAS ROBBED OF A RECEIPT. WHAT WAS THE RECEIPT FOR?

I HEAR... IT WAS FOR... A VALUABLE GEM. THAT IS THE RUMOR.

AND WHAT DO THE RUMORS SAY ABOUT...

SCANDAL SAYS THAT THE MOONSTONE IS A PLEDGE TO MR. LUKER... AND THAT I... AM THE ONE WHO PAWNED IT.

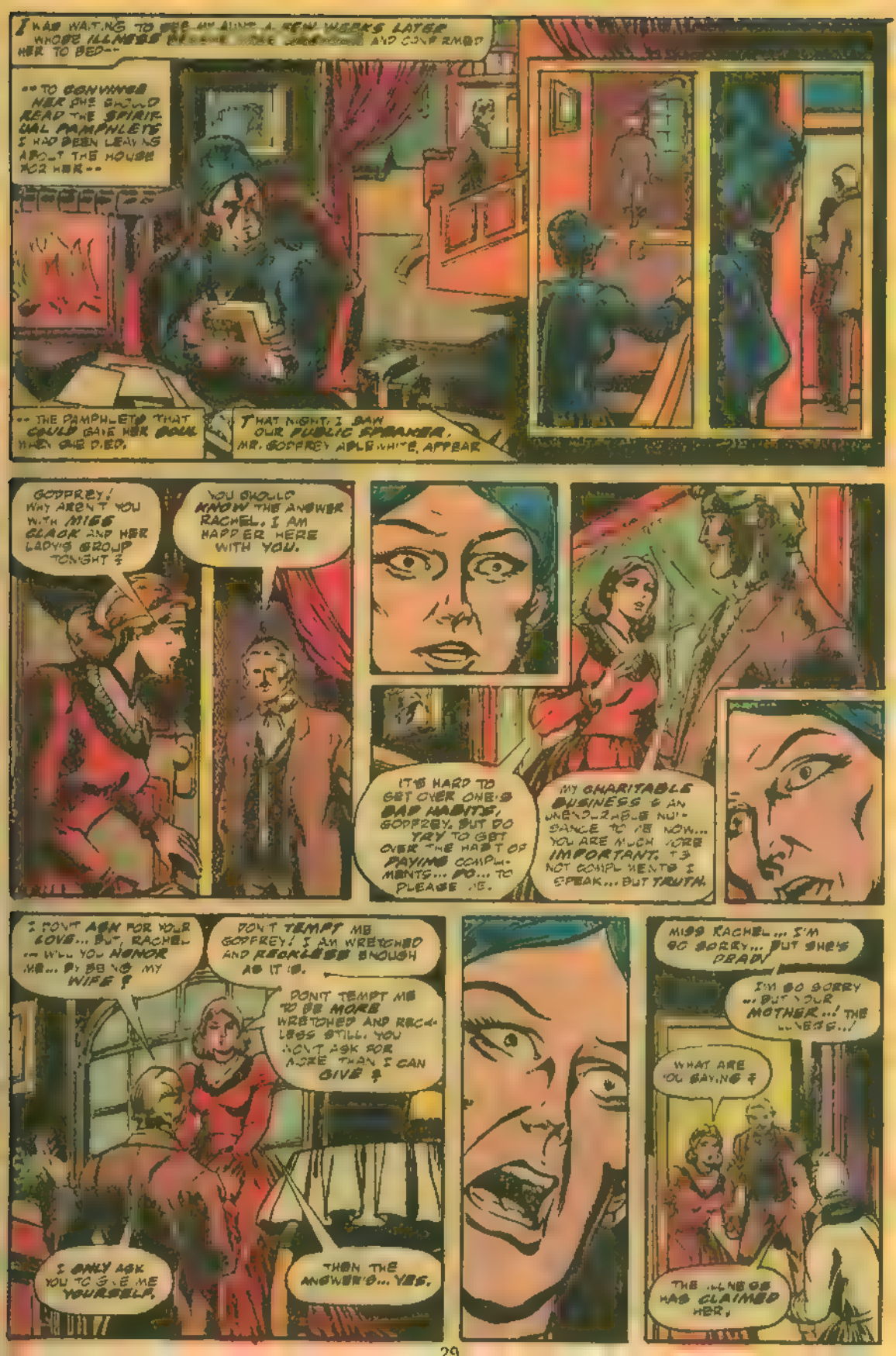
OH, MAMA! MISS CLACK, WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

HEAR WHAT I SAY!... I KNOW THE HAND THAT TOOK THE MOONSTONE!

I KNOW THAT GODFREY ABLEWHITE IS INNOCENT.

RACHEL WENT ON WITH HER QUESTIONING. BRAVEST BIBLICAL STUDENTS AND PERHAPS BE AN HEIR OF THE BLINDED CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL... WHAT WENT ON WITH THESE ORGIES... IN THE TIME BEFORE THE FLOOD.

THAT WAS ALSO THE DAY I LEARNED MY AUNT JULIA WAS GRAVELY ILL, UNBEKNOWNST TO HER TEMPESTUOUS DAUGHTER ... AND I RESOLVED THEN AND THERE TO MAKE A PROPER CHRISTIAN OF MY AUNT BEFORE SHE DIED.


I WAS WAITING TO SEE MY AUNT A FEW WEEKS LATER WHOSE ILLNESS [redacted] AND CONFINED HER TO BED--
--TO CONVINCE HER SHE SHOULD READ THE SPIRITUAL PAMPHLETS I HAD BEEN LEAVING ABOUT THE HOUSE FOR HER--
--THE PAMPHLETS THAT COULD GAIN HER SOUL WHEN SHE D.ED.
THAT NIGHT, I SAW OUR PUBLIC SPEAKER, MR. GODFREY ABLE WHITE, APPEAR
GODFREY! WHY AREN'T YOU WITH MISS BLACK AND HER LADY'S GROUP TONIGHT?
YOU SHOULD KNOW THE ANSWER RACHEL. I AM HAPPIER HERE WITH YOU.
IT'S HARD TO GET OVER ONE'S BAD HABITS, GODFREY. BUT DO TRY TO GET OVER THE HABIT OF PAYING COMPLIMENTS... DO... TO PLEASE ME.
MY CHARITABLE BUSINESS IS AN UNENDURABLE NUISANCE TO ME NOW... YOU ARE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT. IT'S NOT COMPLIMENTS I SPEAK... BUT TRUTH.
I DON'T ASK FOR YOUR LOVE... BUT, RACHEL -- WILL YOU HONOR ME... BY BEING MY WIFE?
DON'T TEMPT ME GODFREY! I AM WRETCHED AND RECKLESS ENOUGH AS IT IS.
DON'T TEMPT ME TO BE MORE WRETCHED AND RECKLESS STILL. YOU MUSTN'T ASK FOR MORE THAN I CAN GIVE!
I ONLY ASK YOU TO GIVE ME YOURSELF.
THEN THE ANSWER'S... YES.
MISS RACHEL... I'M SO SORRY... BUT SHE'S DEAD!
I'M SO SORRY ...BUT YOUR MOTHER...! THE ILLNESS...!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
THE ILLNESS HAS CLAIMED HER.

BEFORE THE DAY OF THE FUNERAL, MR. BRUPP, THE FAMILY LAWYER, CAME TO SEE RACHEL AND THEY HAD A SECRET TALK--
-- AFTER WHICH SHE SUMMONED MR GODFREY ABLEWHITE AND TURNED DOWN HIS MARRIAGE PROPOSAL.
I KNEW RACHEL WOULD TURN FOR SYMPATHY, AND I WOULD BE THAT COMFORTING PERSON. NEVER HAD EVANGELIZING
WHEN I HAD CONVERTED HER, I KNEW SHE WOULD TELL ME ALL ABOUT THE MOONSTONE AND OTHER REVELATIONS.
RACHEL, I WANT YOU TO COME AND STAY AT MY PLACE TILL YOU RECOVER.
NO, MR. BRUPP... LAWYER OR NOT...! I WILL NOT HAVE IT!
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND, RACHEL? HAVEN'T YOU SEEN YET THAT MY HEART YEARNS TO MAKE A CHRISTIAN OF YOU?
HAS NO INNER VOICE TOLD YOU WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO FOR YOUR MOTHER WHEN DEATH SNATCHED HER OUT OF MY HANDS?
I TRIED TO SAVE HER!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT ABOUT MY MOTHER'S HARMLESS--
-- USEFUL--
-- BEAUTIFUL LIFE?
DON'T EVER... EVER!... TRY TO MAKE ME DOUBT THAT MY MOTHER.. WHO WAS AN ANGEL ON EARTH... IS AN ANGEL IN HEAVEN NOW.
I BORE RACHEL'S INSULT WITH MY CUSTOMARY FORTITUDE.
I WAS LEFT ALONE... REVILED BY THEM ALL... DESERTED BY THEM ALL.
FROM THAT DAY FORTH... I NEVER SAW RACHEL VERINDER AGAIN.

SECOND NARRATIVE
CONTRIBUTED BY MATHEW BRUFF OF GREAT NORTH ROAD
I HAVE LEARNED THAT YOUR SUITOR... HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET HIS HANDS ON YOUR MOTHER'S WILL... AND THAT HIS MOTIVES FOR MARRYING YOU HINGE ON THAT FACT.
YOU MUST TAKE HIM TO TASK, RACHEL... NOW! HE'S A DEADLY, RECEITFUL MAN.
MY DEAR FRIEND MISS CLACK, HAVING LAID DOWN THE PEN THERE ARE TWO REASONS FOR MY TAKING IT UP NEXT.
IN THE FIRST PLACE, I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR MISS NEWTON BREAKING HER MARRIAGE ENGAGEMENT TO GODFREY ABLEWHITE.
HOW CAN I ADMIT HE [illegible] ME. AFTER I HAVE DEGRADED MYSELF BY EVER THINKING OF [illegible] AS MY HUSBAND.
THE SHAME OF IT WOULD MEAN NOTHING TO HIM.
BUT THE SHAME OF IT WOULD BE UNENDURABLE TO ME.
I SHALL SAY THAT I HAVE THOUGHT IT OVER... AND THAT I AM SATISFIED IT WILL BE BEST FOR BOTH OF US IF WE PART.
NO MORE THAN THAT?
NO MORE.
YOU CAN'T BRAVE PUBLIC OPINION... AT THE COMMAND OF PRIVATE [illegible].
I CAN.
I HAVE DONE IT ALREADY.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN [illegible] MOONSTONE, MR. BRUFF... HAVE I NOT BRAVED PUBLIC OPINION, THERE, WITH MY OWN PRIVATE REASONS FOR IT.

THIS STORY IS CONTRIBUTED BY FRANKLIN BLAKE
IN THE SPRING OF THE YEAR 1849 I WAS WANDERING IN THE EAST. I WENT ABROAD, RESOLVED... THAT CHANGE AND ABSENCE COULD HELP ME... TO FORGET RACHEL.
IT IS I AM PERSUADED NO TRUE VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE WHICH DENIES THAT CHANGE AND ABSENCE DO HELP A MAN UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.
THEY FORCE HIS ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE EXCLUSIVE CONTEMPLATION OF HIS OWN SORROW.
STILL--
I NEVER FORGOT HER.
ON LEAVING ENGLAND, SHE WAS THE LAST PERSON WHOSE NAME I WOULD HAVE SUFFERED TO PASS MY LIPS.
ON RETURNING TO ENGLAND, SHE WAS THE FIRST PERSON I INQUIRED AFTER WHEN MR. BRUFF AND I MET AGAIN...
SHE REFUSES TO SEE ME... I CAN'T GET PAST THE MAID.
HAS RACHEL EVER SPOKEN OF ME IN THE TIME I'VE BEEN GONE?
OR HAS THERE BEEN ANY SLANDER TOWARD ME?
NOT THAT I KNOW OF AND SHE'S NEVER MENTIONED YOU -- AT ALL.
THEN IT'S CERTAIN... SHE'S STILL BITTER TOWARD ME... WHICH LEAVES ME LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO RETURN TO YORKSHIRE.
MAY I ASK FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
THE ASSISTANCE I INNOCENTLY RENDERED TO FIND THE DIAMOND WAS AN UNPARDONED OFFENSE IN RACHEL'S MIND.
I WON'T ACCEPT THAT POSITION!
I AM DETERMINED TO FIND OUT THE SECRET OF HER SILENCE TOWARD HER MOTHER --
-- AND HER ENMITY TOWARD ME!
IT'S TIME... PAINS... AND MONEY CAN DO IT--
-- I WILL LAY MY HAND ON THE THIEF WHO TOOK THE MOONSTONE!
I SHALL TAKE UP THE INQUIRY AGAIN AT THE POINT WHERE I DROPPED IT--
-- AND I SHALL FOLLOW IT ONWARD TILL I COME TO THE PRESENT TIME!
THERE ARE MISSING LINKS IN THE EVIDENCE AS I LEFT IT... WHICH GABRIEL BETTERIDGE CAN SUPPLY.
AND TO GABRIEL BETTERIDGE I GO!

MR. FRANKLIN! WHAT A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE — AND I'M BURNING TO KNOW WHAT BRINGS YOU BACK TO US!
THE MOONSTONE... BUT WHAT BRINGS YOU NOW SIR?
WHAT BROUGHT ME HERE BEFORE?
THE MOONSTONE, SAN.
IF THAT'S A JOKE SIR — I'M AFRAID I'M SETTING A LITTLE DULL IN MY OLD AGE.
IT'S NO JOKE.
LET THE DIAMOND BE MR. FRANKLIN!
TAKE MY ADVICE! — THAT CURSED INDIAN JEWEL HAS MISGUIDED EVERYBODY WHO HAS COME NEAR IT.
DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY AND YOUR TEMPER... IN THE FINE SPRINGTIME OF YOUR LIFE SIR.
HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO SUCCEED WHERE SGT. CUFF MADE A MESS OF IT.
MY MIND IS MADE UP, MR. FRANKLIN. I MEAN TO ENCOUNTER THE NOTORIOUS CUFF.
HE HAS RETIRED SIR. HE WON'T HELP. HE'S UP TO HIS EYES IN ROSES.
THE ONLY CLUE THAT MIGHT HELP COULD BE THE SEALED LETTER ROSANNA LEFT FOR YOU
WHERE IS IT?
I THINK SUCCY HAS IT. LET US GET ON TO COBB'S HOLE THEN SIR.
I THINK YOU HAVE GOT A LETTER FOR ME.
BETTERIDGE, I CAN SEE WHAT ROSANNA SAW IN HIS FACE.
I CAN'T GUESS WHAT SHE HEARD IN HIS VOICE.
OH MY LOST DARLING! WHAT COULD YOU SEE IN THIS MAN?
TAKE IT! TAKE IT AND GET AWAY! GOD ALMIGHTY FORBID I SHOULD EVER SET EYES ON YOU AGAIN!

Sir:
If you are curious to know the meaning of my behaviour to you, do what you are told to do in the memorandum enclosed with this.
Rosanna Spearman

Memorandum:
To go to the Shivering Sand at the turn of tide... walk out to South Spit Beacon... lay down on the rocks and feel among the sea weed for the chain and pull the chain.

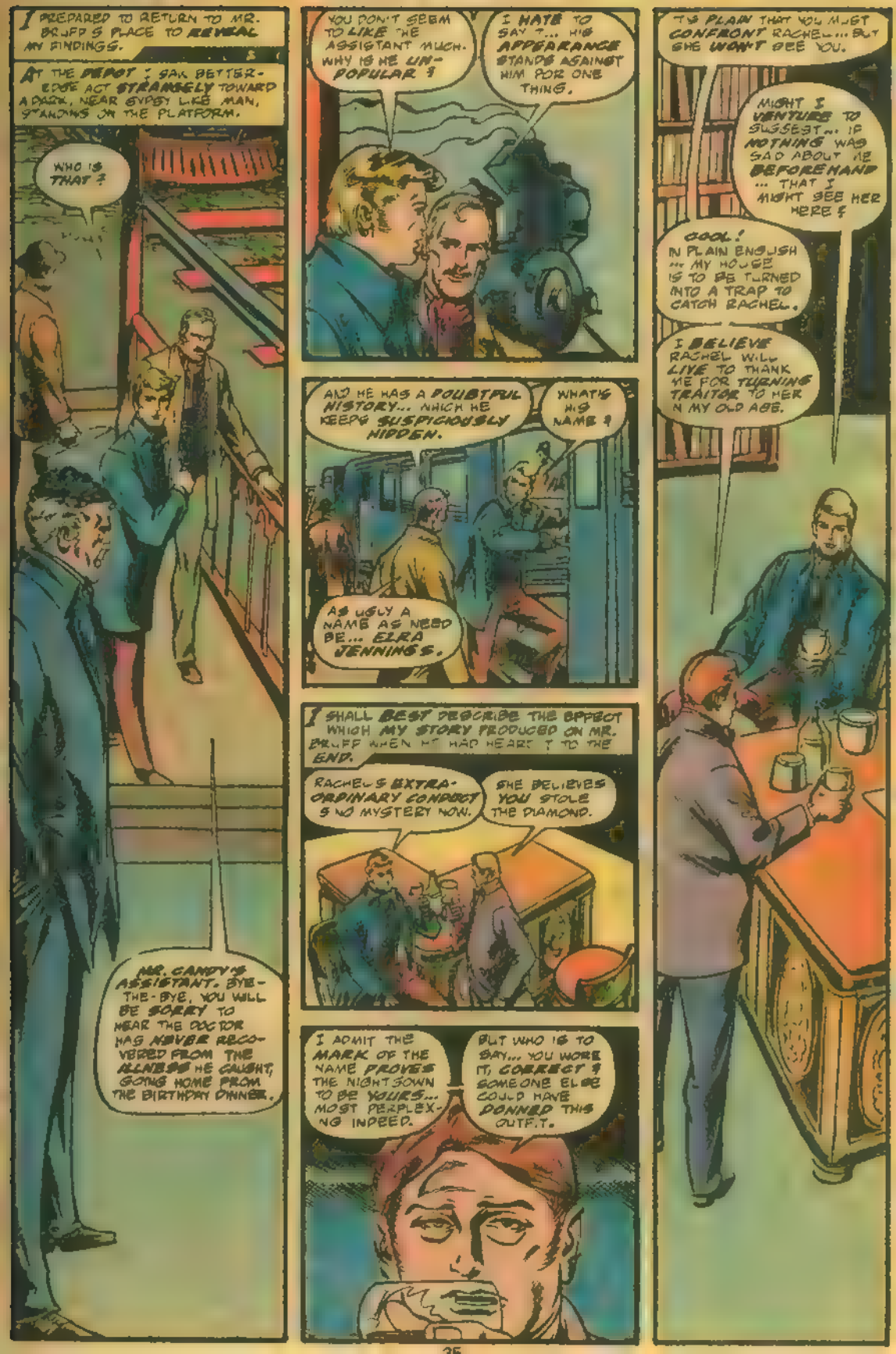
THE SIGHT OF THE QUICKSAND GO NEAR TO ME GAVE ME A HORRIBLE FANCY--
-- THAT THE DEAD WOMAN MIGHT APPEAR ON THE SCENE OF HER SUICIDE TO ASSIST MY SEARCH.

AN UNUTTERABLE DREAD OF SEEING HER RISE THROUGH THE HEAVING SURFACE OF THE SAND--
-- FORCED ITSELF INTO MY MIND.

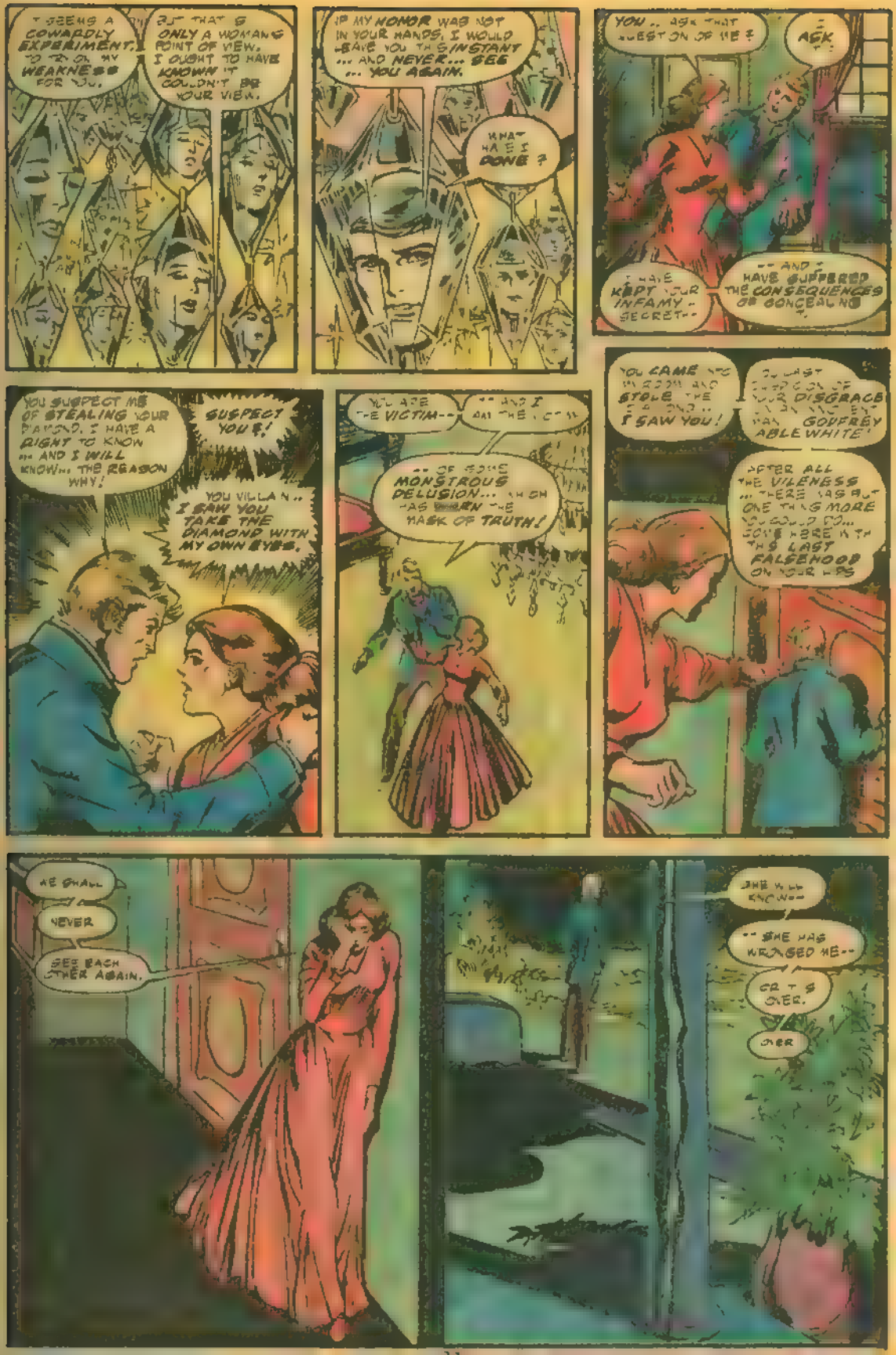
-- AND TURNED ME COLD IN THE SUNLIGHT.
THE STICK STRUCK AGAINST THE TIN CASE... AND I KNEW WE HAD FOUND...
...ROSANNA'S LEGACY!

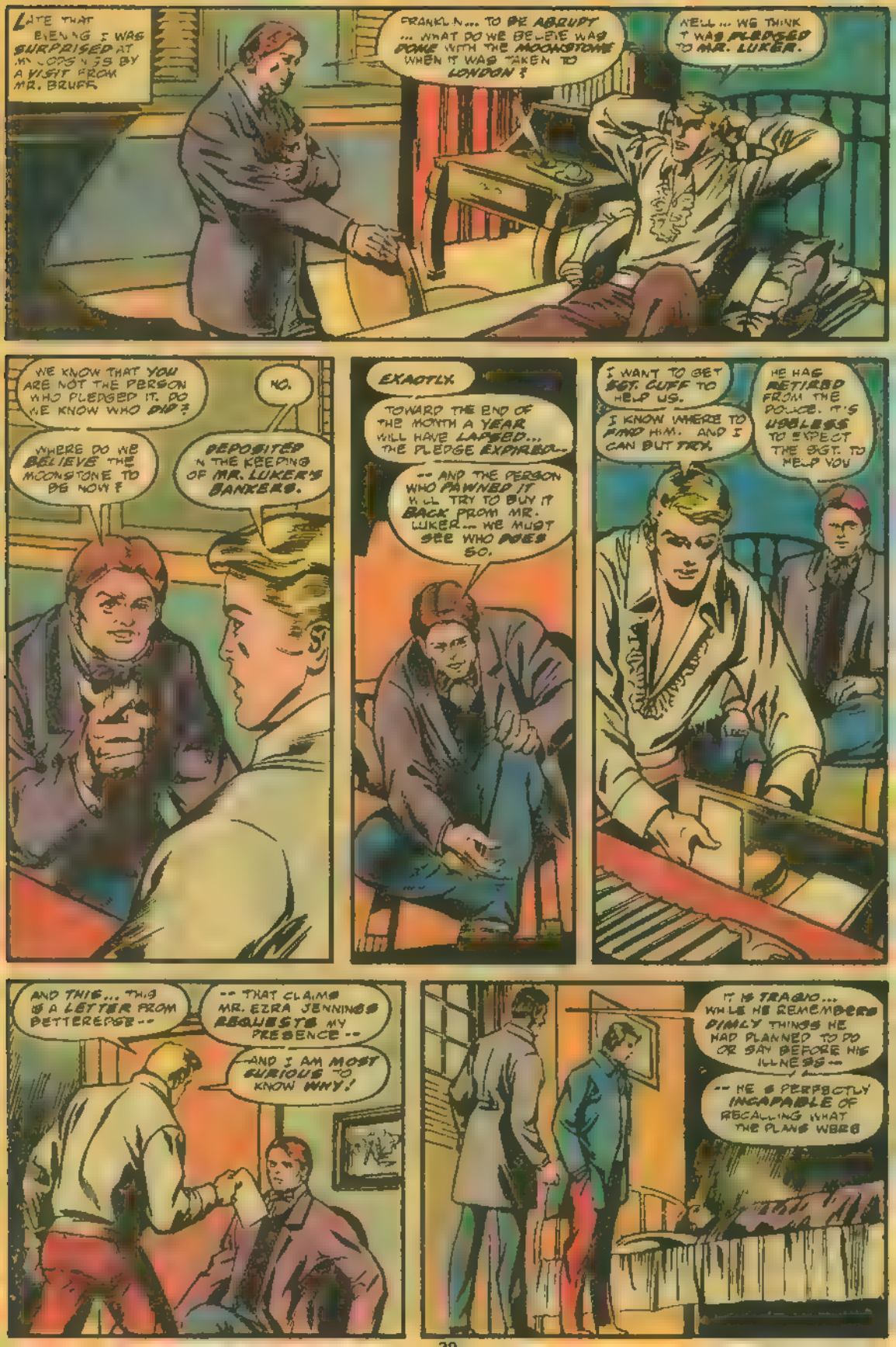
INSIDE THERE WAS NO MISTAKING THE ARTICLE OF DRESS. IT WAS A NIGHTGOWN... WITH THE SMEAR OF PAINT FROM THE DOOR OF RACHEL'S BOUDOIR
THE THIEF HAD WORN THIS SHIFT SO AS THE LIGHT OF THE MOONSTONE MIGHT BE STOLEN AND IT WAS MARKED... WITH MY OWN NAME!

Sir,
It would be very disgraceful to me to tell you this, if I was a living woman when you read it. I may own the truth... with the quicksand waiting to hide me when the words are written.
It could cost a servant her place to question her mistress' daughter's beauty when one knows its only Rachel's clothes that make her desirable.
The morning after the robbery I went to make your bed and found your nightgown and hid it. I made another one like it so that Sgt. Cuff could never suspect you.
I wanted to make you look at me. That is why I approached you Sgt. Cuff spotted me awaiting for you in the shrubbery. You never saw me, nor knew you were safe as long as I kept the gown hidden.
I have hidden this so at last in death, when you discover this, I will have your gratitude.
I beg to remain, Sir Your true lover and humble servant
Rosanna Spearman

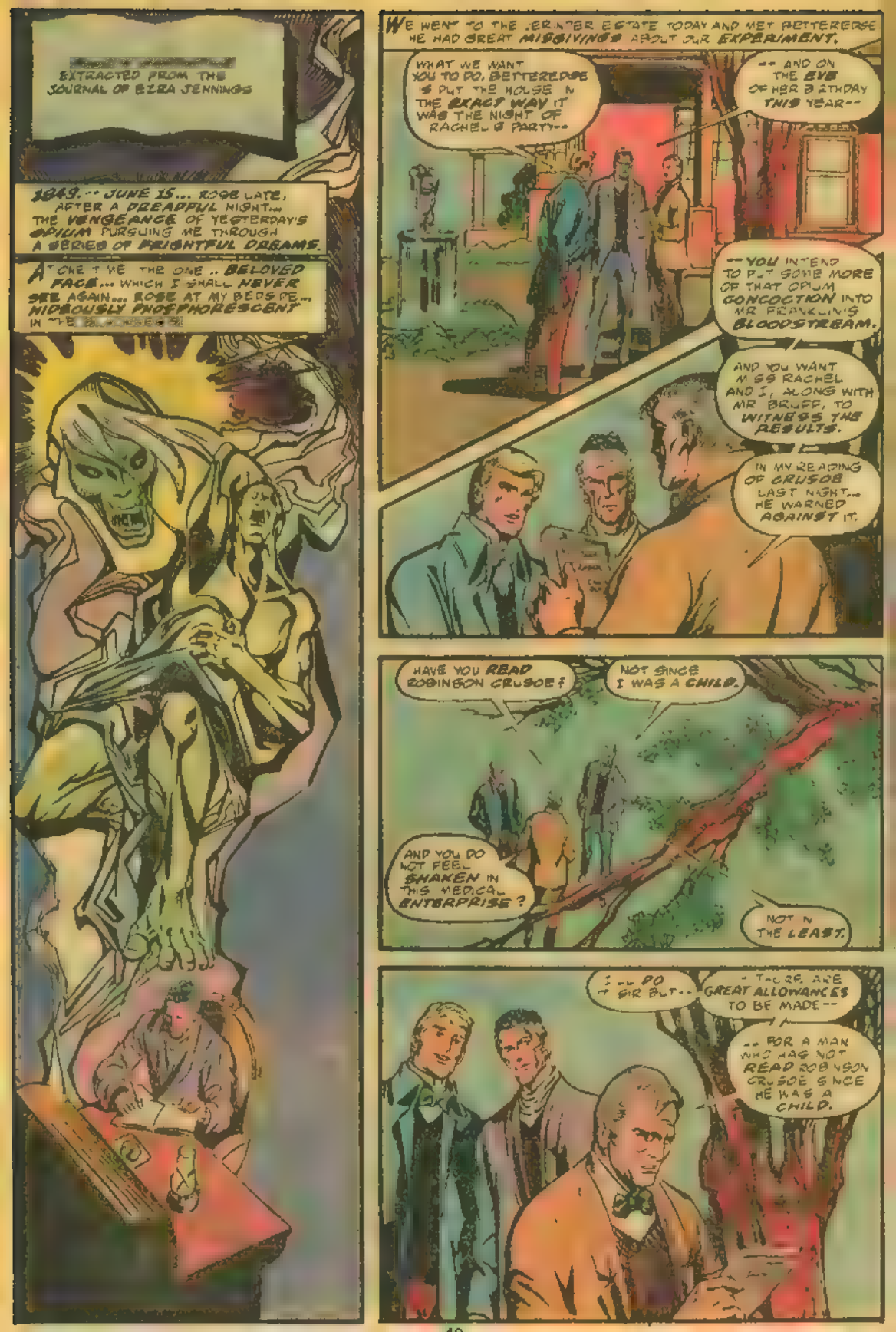

I PREPARED TO RETURN TO MR. BRUFF'S PLACE TO REVEAL MY FINDINGS.
AT THE DEPOT I SAW BETTERIDGE ACT STRANGELY TOWARD A DARK, NEAR GYPSY LIKE MAN, STANDING ON THE PLATFORM.
WHO IS THAT?
MR. CANDY'S ASSISTANT. BYE-THE-BYE, YOU WILL BE SORRY TO HEAR THE DOCTOR HAS NEVER RECOVERED FROM THE ILLNESS HE CAUGHT, GOING HOME FROM THE BIRTHDAY DINNER.
YOU DON'T SEEM TO LIKE THE ASSISTANT MUCH. WHY IS HE UNPOPULAR?
I HATE TO SAY... HIS APPEARANCE STANDS AGAINST HIM FOR ONE THING.
AND HE HAS A DOUBTFUL HISTORY... WHICH HE KEEPS SUSPICIOUSLY HIDDEN.
WHAT'S HIS NAME?
AS UGLY A NAME AS NEED BE... EZRA JENNINGS.
I SHALL BEST DESCRIBE THE EFFECT WHICH MY STORY PRODUCED ON MR. BRUFF WHEN HE HAD HEARD IT TO THE END.
RACHEL'S EXTRAORDINARY CONDUCT IS NO MYSTERY NOW.
SHE BELIEVES YOU STOLE THE DIAMOND.
I ADMIT THE MARK OF THE NAME PROVES THE NIGHTGOWN TO BE YOURS... MOST PERPLEXING INDEED.
BUT WHO IS TO SAY... YOU WORE IT, CORRECT? SOMEONE ELSE COULD HAVE DONNED THIS OUTFIT.
IT'S PLAIN THAT YOU MUST CONFRONT RACHEL... BUT SHE WON'T SEE YOU.
MIGHT I VENTURE TO SUGGEST... IF NOTHING WAS SAID ABOUT ME BEFOREHAND ... THAT I MIGHT SEE HER HERE?
COOL! IN PLAIN ENGLISH ... MY HOUSE IS TO BE TURNED INTO A TRAP TO CATCH RACHEL.
I BELIEVE RACHEL WILL LIVE TO THANK ME FOR TURNING TRAITOR TO HER IN MY OLD AGE.

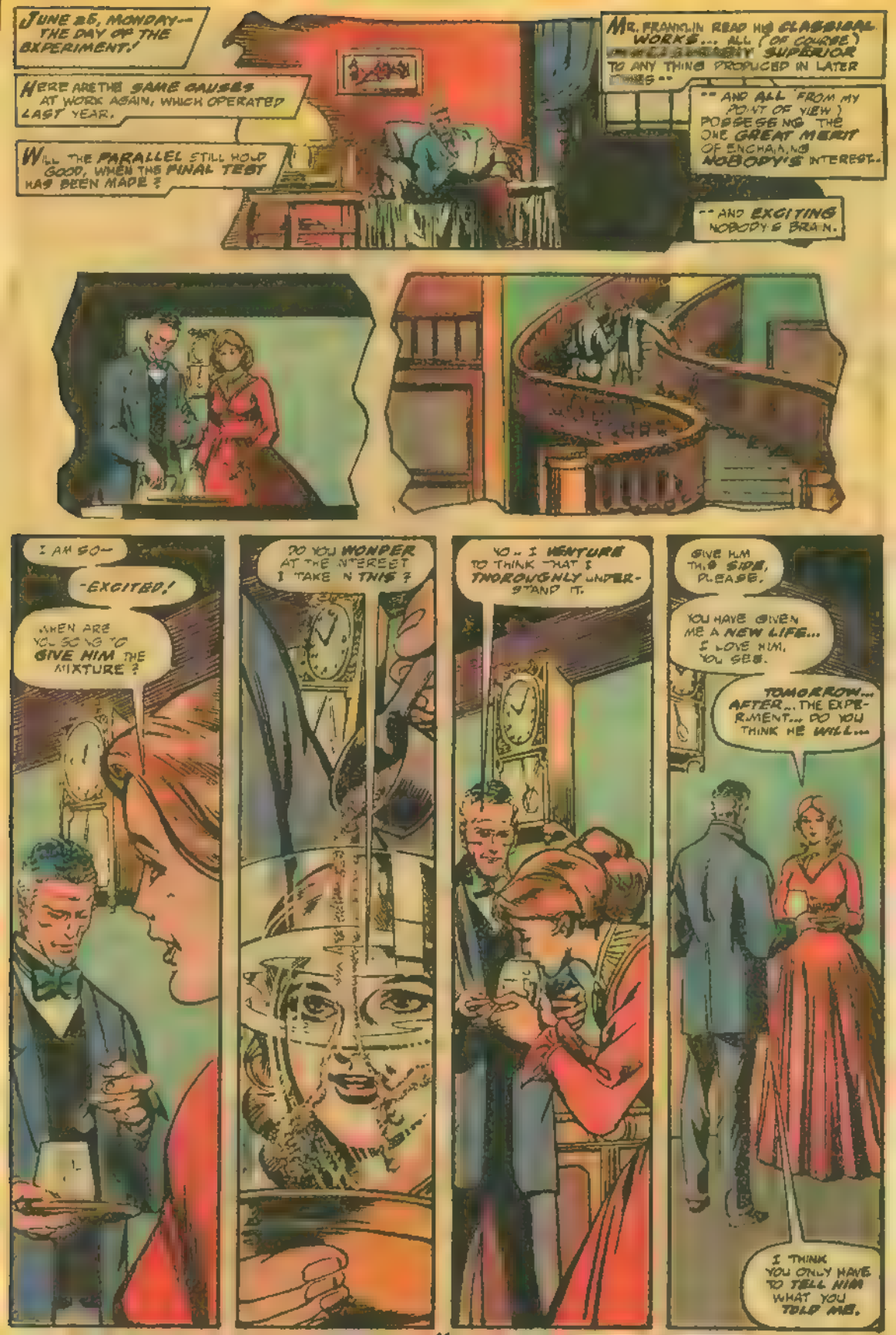
AT THE MOMENT WHEN I SHOWED MYSELF IN THE DOORWAY, RACHEL ROSE FROM THE PIANO.
I CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND ME. WE CONFRONTED EACH OTHER IN SILENCE... WITH THE FULL LENGTH OF THE ROOM BETWEEN US
I FORGOT EVERY CONSIDERATION... PAST, PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE WHICH I WAS BOUND TO REMEMBER.
I SAW NOTHING BUT THE WOMAN I LOVED--
-- COMING NEARER AND NEARER TO ME.
I COULD RESIST HER NO LONGER--
--I CAUGHT HER IN MY ARMS AND COVERED HER FACE WITH KISSES.
THERE WAS A MOMENT WHEN I THOUGHT THE KISSES WERE RETURNED--
--A MOMENT WHEN SHE, TOO MIGHT HAVE FORGOTTEN.
ALMOST BEFORE THE IDEA COULD SHAPE ITSELF IN MY MIND--
-- SHE THRUST ME BACK FROM HER--
-- WITH A CRY WHICH WAS LIKE A CRY OF--
HORROR!

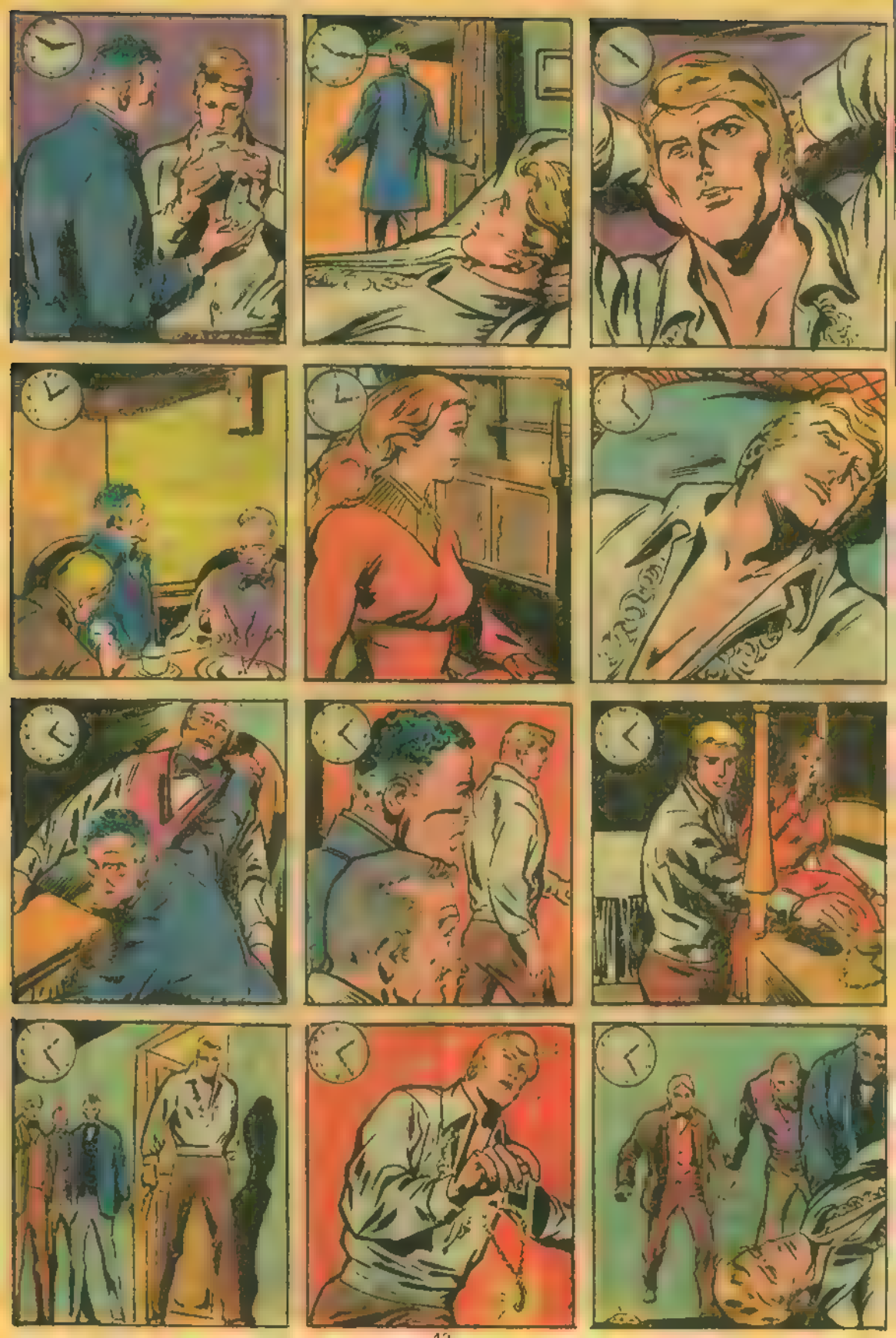

IT SEEMS A COWARDLY EXPERIMENT... TO TRY ON MY WEAKNESS FOR YOU.
BUT THAT IS ONLY A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW. I OUGHT TO HAVE KNOWN IT COULDN'T BE YOUR VIEW.
IF MY HONOR WAS NOT IN YOUR HANDS, I WOULD HAVE YOU THIS INSTANT ... AND NEVER... SEE ... YOU AGAIN.
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
YOU... ASK THAT QUESTION OF ME?
I ASK.
I HAVE KEPT YOUR INFAMY SECRET--
-- AND I HAVE SUFFERED THE CONSEQUENCES OF CONCEALING
YOU SUSPECT ME OF STEALING YOUR DIAMOND. I HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW ... AND I WILL KNOW... THE REASON WHY!
SUSPECT YOU?!
YOU VILLAIN... I SAW YOU TAKE THE DIAMOND WITH MY OWN EYES.
YOU ARE THE VICTIM--
-- AND I AM THE VICTIM
-- OF SOME MONSTROUS DELUSION... WHICH HAS TAKEN THE MASK OF TRUTH!
YOU CAME INTO MY ROOM AND STOLE THE DIAMOND... I SAW YOU!
YOU LAST SURVIVOR OF YOUR DISGRACED HOUSE! GODFREY ABLEWHITE!
AFTER ALL THE VILENESS ... THERE WAS BUT ONE THING MORE YOU COULD DO... COME HERE WITH THIS LAST FALSEHOOD ON YOUR LIPS
WE SHALL NEVER SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.
SHE WILL KNOW--
-- SHE HAS AVENGED ME--
IT'S OVER.
OVER

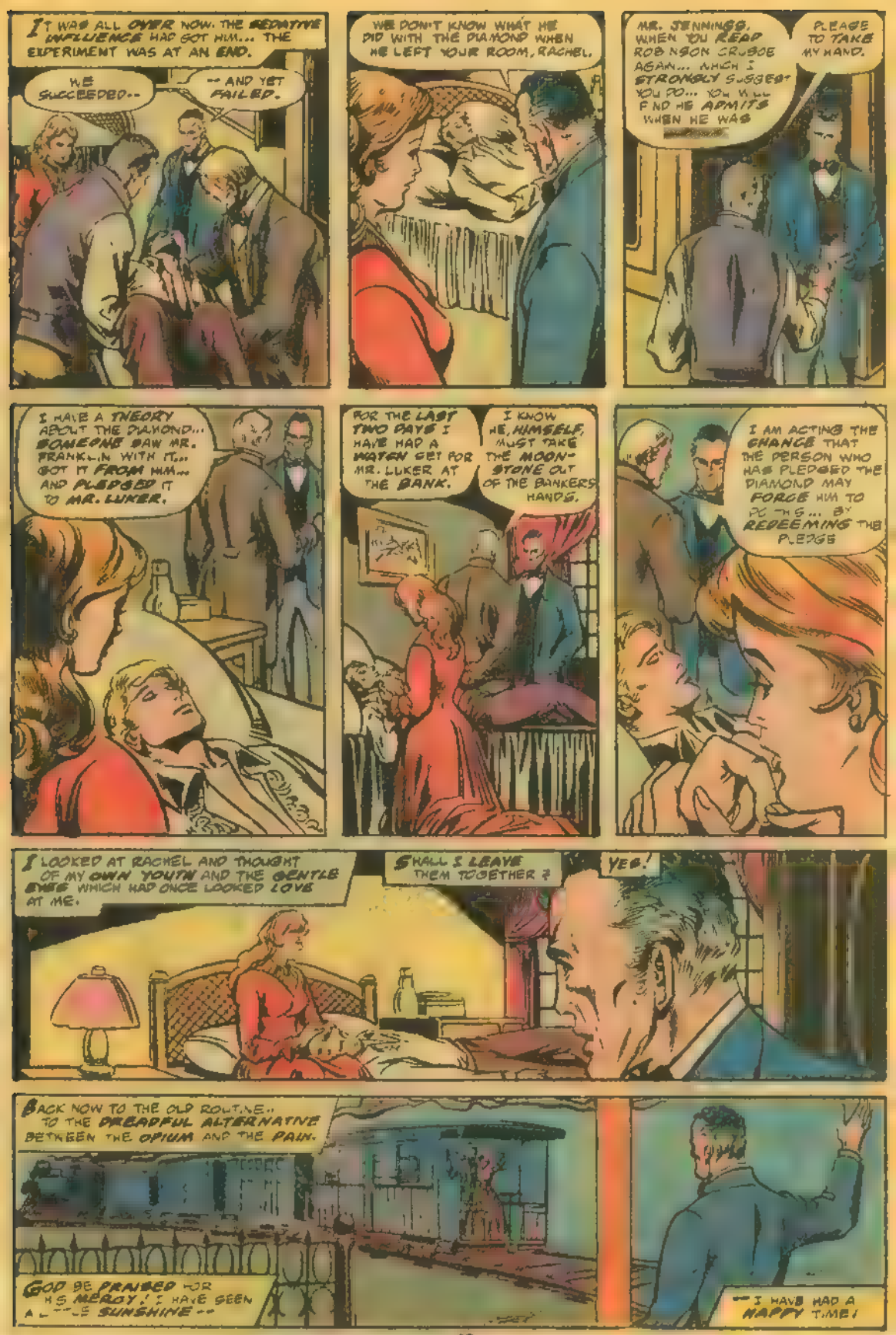

LATE THAT EVENING I WAS SURPRISED AT MY LODGINGS BY A VISIT FROM MR. BRUFF.
FRANKLY... TO BE ABRUPT ... WHAT DO WE BELIEVE WAS DONE WITH THE MOONSTONE WHEN IT WAS TAKEN TO LONDON?
WELL... WE THINK IT WAS PLEDGED TO MR. LUKER.
WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOT THE PERSON WHO PLEDGED IT. DO WE KNOW WHO DID?
NO.
WHERE DO WE BELIEVE THE MOONSTONE TO BE NOW?
DEPOSITED IN THE KEEPING OF MR. LUKER'S BANKERS.
EXACTLY.
TOWARD THE END OF THE MONTH A YEAR WILL HAVE LAPSED... THE PLEDGE EXPIRED...
-- AND THE PERSON WHO PAWNED IT WILL TRY TO BUY IT BACK FROM MR. LUKER... WE MUST SEE WHO DOES SO.
I WANT TO GET SGT. CUFF TO HELP US.
I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM. AND I CAN BUT TRY.
HE HAS RETIRED FROM THE POLICE. IT'S USELESS TO EXPECT THE SGT. TO HELP YOU
AND THIS... THIS IS A LETTER FROM BETTEREDGE --
-- THAT CLAIMS MR. EZRA JENNINGS REQUESTS MY PRESENCE --
-AND I AM MOST CURIOUS TO KNOW WHY!
IT IS TRAGIC... WHILE HE REMEMBERS DIMLY THINGS HE HAD PLANNED TO DO OR SAY BEFORE HIS ILLNESS --
-- HE IS PERFECTLY INCAPABLE OF RECALLING WHAT THE PLANS WERE

WE LEFT MR CANDY STRICKEN WITH A PRESENT HE WAS EMBARRASSED BY AND WALKED TO A SECLUDED PLACE.
EZRA WAS SHUNNED BY THE VILLAGE FOLK... AND THE PAIN OF THEIR REJECTION WAS IN HIS EYES.
HE CANDY WAS KIND ENOUGH TO TAKE ME IN... DESPITE MY PAST... BUT THE TOWNSFOLK, THEY NEVER COME TO ME WHEN THEY ARE ILL.
FOR 20 YEARS I HAVE SUFFERED FROM A TERMINAL ILLNESS... AND I WANT TO PROVIDE FOR A PERSON... VERY DEAR TO ME, BEFORE I PASS AWAY.
THE ONE EFFECTIVE TREATMENT IS... OPIUM...
...AND THAT FACT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, MR FRANKLIN
THIS CASE HAS DESTROYED MY NERVOUS SYSTEM ... MY NIGHTS ARE FULL OF HORROR.
LET ME ASK YOU... HAVE YOU SLEPT BEFORE THE... SLEEP BADLY?
YES, MR CANDY AND I ARGUED ABOUT THE FACT.. THOUGH I SLEPT SOUNDLY THE NIGHT OF THE THEFT
THAT WAS THE VINDICATION OF MY INNOCENCE IN MY HANDS.
WERE YOU ANXIOUS FOR THE CASE TO BE SOLVED?
STRONGLY... AS I HAD BEEN THE VICTIM OF A CONSPIRACY ... AS I FEARED FOR RACHEL'S SAFETY
YOU DID ENTER ROSEBUD'S ROOM... BUT IN A STATE OF TRANCE... PRODUCED BY OPIUM... I'D SWEAR IT!
MR. CANDY ADMINISTERED IT TO YOU IN DRINK ... TO CONVINCE YOU OF HIS INNOCENCE ... AND DELL ILL BEFORE HE HAD A CHANCE TO TELL OF HIS TRICK.
WHAT HE DIDN'T REALIZE WAS THAT I WOULD REPRODUCE THE EXACT CONDITIONS OF THE NIGHT AND LEARN WHAT REALLY HAPPENED
THE NIGHT ... THE MOONSTONE DISAPPEARED!


EXTRACTED FROM THE JOURNAL OF EZRA JENNINGS
1849.-- JUNE 15... ROSE LATE, AFTER A DREADFUL NIGHT... THE VENGEANCE OF YESTERDAY'S OPIUM PURSUING ME THROUGH A SERIES OF FRIGHTFUL DREAMS.
AT ONE T ME THE ONE.. BELOVED FACE... WHICH I SHALL NEVER SEE AGAIN... ROSE AT MY BEDSIDE... HIDEOUSLY PHOSPHORESCENT IN TH
WE WENT TO THE ..ERALDER ESTATE TODAY AND MET BETTEREDGE HE HAD GREAT MISGIVINGS ABOUT OUR EXPERIMENT.
WHAT WE WANT YOU TO DO, BETTEREDGE IS PUT THE HOUSE IN THE EXACT WAY IT WAS THE NIGHT OF RACHEL'S PARTY--
-- AND ON THE EVE OF HER B 2THDAY THIS YEAR--
--YOU INTEND TO PUT SOME MORE OF THAT OPIUM CONCOCTION INTO MR FRANKLIN'S BLOODSTREAM.
AND YOU WANT M SS RACHEL AND I, ALONG WITH MR BRUFF, TO WITNESS THE RESULTS.
IN MY READING OF CRUSOE LAST NIGHT... HE WARNED AGAINST IT.
HAVE YOU READ ROBINSON CRUSOE?
NOT SINCE I WAS A CHILD.
AND YOU DO NOT FEEL SHAKEN IN THIS MEDICAL ENTERPRISE?
NOT IN THE LEAST.
I -- DO T SIR BUT--
- THERE ARE GREAT ALLOWANCES TO BE MADE --
-- FOR A MAN WHO HAS NOT READ ROBINSON CRUSOE SINCE HE WAS A CHILD.


JUNE 25, MONDAY— THE DAY OF THE EXPERIMENT!
HERE ARE THE SAME CAUSES AT WORK AGAIN, WHICH OPERATED LAST YEAR.
WILL THE PARALLEL STILL HOLD GOOD, WHEN THE FINAL TEST HAS BEEN MADE?
MR. FRANKLIN READ HIS CLASSICAL WORKS... ALL (OF COURSE) [illegible] SUPERIOR TO ANY THING PRODUCED IN LATER TIMES—
—AND ALL FROM MY POINT OF VIEW) POSSESSING THE ONE GREAT MERIT OF ENCHAINING NOBODY'S INTEREST...
—AND EXCITING NOBODY'S BRAIN.
I AM SO— -EXCITED!
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE HIM THE MIXTURE?
DO YOU WONDER AT THE INTEREST I TAKE IN THIS?
YOU—I VENTURE TO THINK THAT I THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND IT.
GIVE HIM THIS SIDE, PLEASE.
YOU HAVE GIVEN ME A NEW LIFE... I LOVE HIM, YOU SEE.
TOMORROW... AFTER... THE EXPERIMENT... DO YOU THINK HE WILL...
I THINK YOU ONLY HAVE TO TELL HIM WHAT YOU TOLD ME.




IT WAS ALL OVER NOW. THE SEDATIVE INFLUENCE HAD GOT HIM... THE EXPERIMENT WAS AT AN END.
WE SUCCEEDED--
-- AND YET FAILED.
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HE DID WITH THE DIAMOND WHEN HE LEFT YOUR ROOM, RACHEL.
MR. JENNINGS, WHEN YOU READ ROBINSON CRUSOE AGAIN... WHICH I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU DO... YOU WILL FIND HE ADMITS WHEN HE WAS
PLEASE TO TAKE MY HAND.
I HAVE A THEORY ABOUT THE DIAMOND... SOMEONE SAW MR. FRANKLIN WITH IT... GOT IT FROM HIM... AND PLEDGED IT TO MR. LUKER.
FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS I HAVE HAD A WATCH SET FOR MR. LUKER AT THE BANK.
I KNOW HE, HIMSELF, MUST TAKE THE MOONSTONE OUT OF THE BANKERS HANDS.
I AM ACTING ON THE CHANCE THAT THE PERSON WHO HAS PLEDGED THE DIAMOND MAY FORCE HIM TO DO THIS... BY REDEEMING THE PLEDGE
I LOOKED AT RACHEL AND THOUGHT OF MY OWN YOUTH AND THE GENTLE EYES WHICH HAD ONCE LOOKED LOVE AT ME.
SHALL I LEAVE THEM TOGETHER ?
YES!
BACK NOW TO THE OLD ROUTINE... TO THE DREADFUL ALTERNATIVE BETWEEN THE OPIUM AND THE PAIN.
GOD BE PRAISED FOR HIS MERCY! I HAVE SEEN A LITTLE SUNSHINE --
-- I HAVE HAD A HAPPY TIME!

FIFTH NARRATIVE

THE STORY RESUMED BY FRANKLIN BLAKE

WE RETURNED TO LONDON. MR. BRUFF HAD HIRED A BOY... NAME OF GOOSEBERRY ... TO WATCH MR. LUKER'S BANK.

ON THE DAY MR. LUKER MADE A WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BANK AND I AWAITED NEWS FROM GOOSEBERRY . I WAS CONFRONTED BY SGT. CUFF.

HIS WHOLE AIM AND OBJECT SEE HED TO BE TO LOOK AS IF HE HAD LIVED IN THE COUNTRY ALL HIS LIFE.

I ONLY GOT BACK FROM IRELAND LAST NIGHT... BEFORE I WENT TO BED I READ YOUR LETTER.

THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO BE SAID ABOUT THE MATTER...

... I COMPLETELY MISTOOK MY CASE.

IT'S ONLY IN BOOKS THAT THE OFFICERS OF THE DETECTIVE FORCE ARE SUPERIOR TO THE WEAKNESS OF MAKING--

-- A MISTAKE.

YOU HAVE COME IN THE NICK OF TIME TO RECOVER YOUR REPUTATION.

I AM RETIRED... BUT THIS ONCE ... THOUGH NO MONEY ON YOUR PART -- THIS... IS FOR HONOR... ONLY. TO HELL WITH REPUTATION!

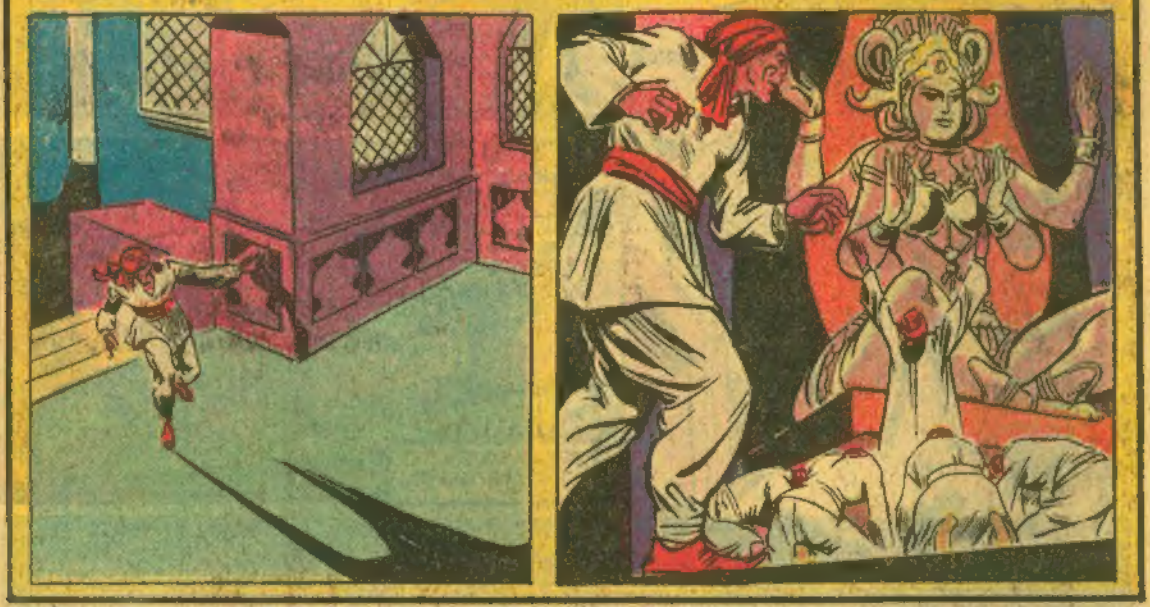
MR. LUKER WITHDREW A PACKAGE HE DID!... SAVE IT TO A SAILOR... AND I FOLLOWED HIM, SIR, I DID... I FOLLOWED HIM TO A HOTEL. A GROUP OF THREE MEN ALSO WERE ON HIS TRAIL!

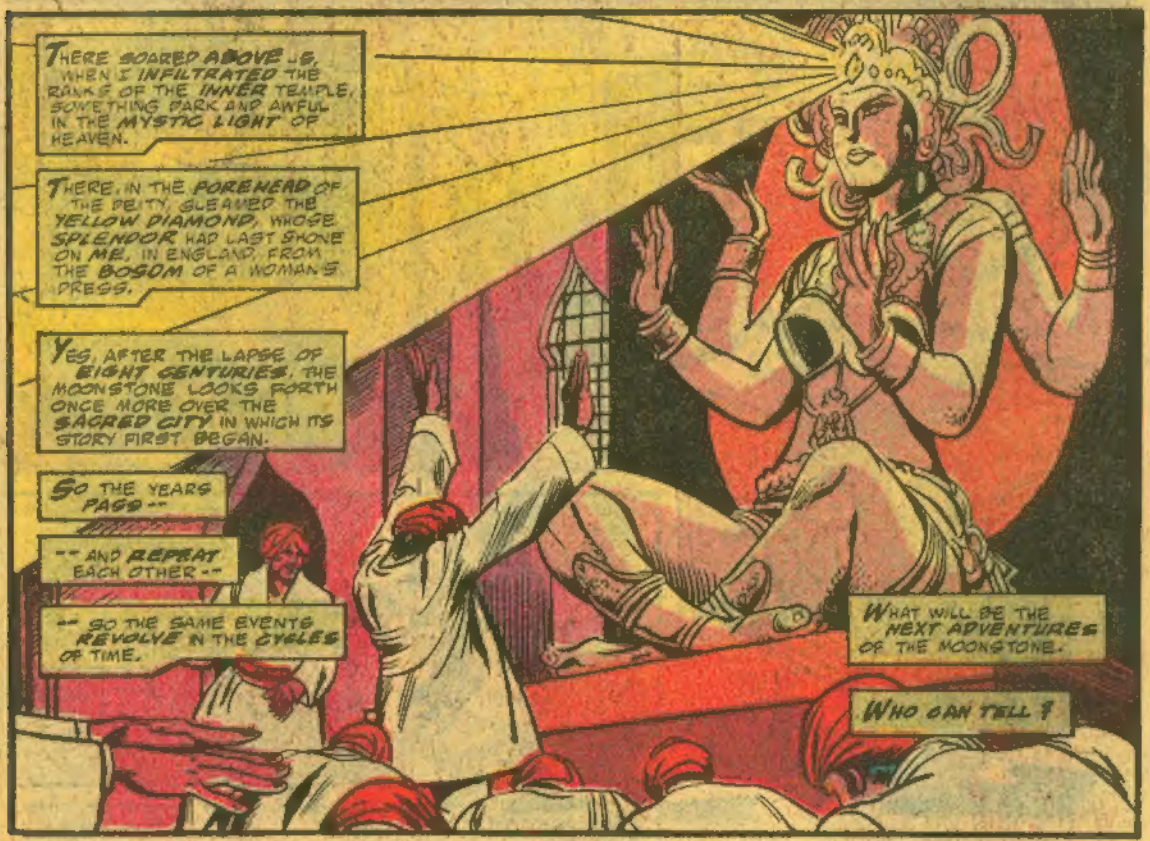
GOOD LAD... THEN LET'S BE ON OUR WAY!

WHAT IS YOUR OPIN ON OF THE CASE SO FAR?
I THINK IT'S SERIOUS SIR JUDGING BY WHAT THE BOY SAW, THE INDIANS ARE IN IT, AGAIN.
AND YOU THINK MR. LUKER PASSED THE DIAMOND TO THE SAILOR?
MOST ASSUREDLY!
THIS GENTLEMAN AND I WANT TO TROUBLE YOU WITH A FEW IN- QUIRIES RELATING TO A SAILOR WHO SLEPT HERE LAST NIGHT.
GOOD GOD! THAT'S THE MAN WHO'S UPSETTING THE HOUSE AT THE PRESENT.
WE CAN'T GET ANY ANSWER FROM HIM... AND THE DOOR IS LOCKED.
NOT--
-- ANY LONGER!
HE'S DEAD!
SEND FOR THE POLICE.
BUT WHO IS IT?
GODFREY ABLEWHITE!
SINCE I READ YOUR LETTER... I KNEW THE GUILTY... HE WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE ONE.

CONTRIBUTED BY SGT. CUPP.
DORKING, SURREY, JULY 30, 1849.. -- TO FRANKLIN BLAKE, ESQ. I BEG TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE DELAY THAT HAS OCCURRED IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE REPORT WITH WHICH I ENGAGED TO FURNISH YOU.
MR GODFREY ABLEWHITE MADE ILLEGAL USAGE OF A TRUST FUND HE HAD BEEN IN CHARGE OF AND HAS DESPERATE SINCE THE TIME WAS DUE TO COLLECT THAT FUND.
ABLEWHITE MADE A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE TO MISS VERINDER. HE THOUGHT SUCH A UNION WOULD END HIS MONEY ANXIETIES... BUT MISS VERINDER REFUSED HIM.
YOU EXASPERATE MR. CANDY, THE DOCTOR ON THE SORE SUBJECT OF HIS PROFESSION. MR. GODFREY ENTERS THE CONSPIRACY AND AIDS HIM IN PLANTING THE DOSAGE OF OPIUM.
YOU AWOKE MR GODFREY WITH YOUR TRANCE INDUCED MUMBLINGS... AND CURIOUS... HE FOLLOWED YOU... JUST TO SEE WHAT YOU WOULD DO.
YOU LOOKED AT HIM IN A DULL SLEEPY WAY. YOU PUT THE DIAMOND INTO HIS HAND. YOU SAID TO HIM, "TAKE IT BACK GODFREY TO YOUR FATHER'S BANK. 'TIS SAFE THERE!"
I HAVE ONLY TO REMIND YOU, BEFORE CLOSING THIS REPORT THAT THERE IS A CHANCE OF LAYING HANDS ON THE INDIANS, AND OF RECOVERING THE MOONSTONE IF THEY ARE NOW ON THEIR PASSAGE TO BOMBAY IN AN EAST INDIA BOUND SHIP. THE AUTHORITIES OF BOMBAY WILL BE PREPARED TO BOARD THE MOMENT SHE ENTERS THE HARBOR.

SEVENTH NARRATIVE IN A LETTER FROM MR. CANDY
FRIZINGHALL, WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 26, 1849, -- DEAR MR. FRANKLIN BLAKE, YOU WILL ANTICIPATE THE SAD NEWS I HAVE TO TELL YOU, ON FINDING YOUR LETTER TO EZRA JENNINGS RETURNED TO YOU UNOPENED.
HE DIED IN MY ARMS... AT SUNRISE ... ON WEDNESDAY LAST.
THIS WAS, AS I THINK, A GREAT MAN--
THOUGH THE WORLD NEVER KNEW HIM.
TRULY YOURS, THOMAS CANDY.
EIGHTH NARRATIVE CONTRIBUTED BY GABRIEL BETTEREDGE
I AM THE PERSON (AS YOU REMEMBER, NO DOUBT) WHO LED THE WAY IN THESE PAGES.
I AM ALSO THE PERSON WHO IS LEFT BEHIND, AS IT WERE, TO CLOSE THE STORY UP.
BETTEREDGE! HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YOU?
HAS YOUR GOOD LADY ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT?
A GREAT DEAL.
THAT'LL TEACH YOU TO SCORN ROBINSON CRUSOE... FOR CRUSOE PREDICTED THE HAPPY EVENT OF YOUR OFFSPRING.
HE DID?
LET NOBODY LAUGH AT THE UNIQUE ANECDOTE HERE RELATED. YOU ARE WELCOME TO BE AS MERRY AS YOU PLEASE OVER EVERYTHING ELSE I HAVE WRITTEN.
BUT WHEN I WRITE OF ROBINSON CRUSOE, BY THE LORD, IT'S SERIOUS, AND I REQUEST YOU TO TAKE IT ACCORDINGLY.




THERE SOARED ABOVE US, WHEN I INFILTRATED THE RANKS OF THE INNER TEMPLE, SOMETHING DARK AND AWFUL IN THE MYSTIC LIGHT OF HEAVEN.
THERE, IN THE FOREHEAD OF THE DEITY, GLEAMED THE YELLOW DIAMOND, WHOSE SPLENDOR HAD LAST SHONE ON ME, IN ENGLAND, FROM THE BOSOM OF A WOMAN'S DRESS.
YES, AFTER THE LAPSE OF EIGHT CENTURIES, THE MOONSTONE LOOKS FORTH ONCE MORE OVER THE SACRED CITY IN WHICH ITS STORY FIRST BEGAN.
SO THE YEARS PASS --
-- AND REPEAT EACH OTHER --
-- SO THE SAME EVENTS REVOLVE IN THE CYCLES OF TIME.
WHAT WILL BE THE NEXT ADVENTURES OF THE MOONSTONE.
WHO CAN TELL ?

Wilkie
Collins

ON SALE NOW!

MORE FINE ILLUSTRATED ADAPTATIONS IN THE MARVEL CLASSICS SERIES!

AND COMING IN JULY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S KIDNAPPED & EDGAR ALAN POE'S PIT AND THE PENDULUM!